United Nations S/PV.5304

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5304th meeting

Friday, 11 November 2005, 1.10 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. García Moritán
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	China	Mr. Li Song
	Denmark	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Greece	Mrs. Papadopoulou
	Japan	Mr. Kawakami
	Philippines	Mr. Chuasoto
	Romania	Mr. Dumitru
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Howe-Jones
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Manongi
	United States of America	Mr. Olsen

Agenda

The situation in Liberia

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05-60062 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 1.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Liberia

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on the agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultation.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2005/710, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Denmark, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objections, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Greece, Japan, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1638 (2005).

I will now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements in explanation of vote.

Mr. Valle (Brazil): Brazil joined the consensus regarding the adoption of resolution 1638 (2005). Our vote reflects our firm commitment to the settlement of all conflicts in Africa. However, we emphasize that the promotion of the rule of law in a country should be exercised primarily by national institutions, with international assistance if so requested. Adherence to the rule of law should be based on strict observance of the domestic legal framework and of international law.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina has participated in the consensus in the adoption of resolution 1638 (2005) on the understanding that any process of post-conflict peacebuilding — in this case in Liberia — necessarily must be conducted with respect for the law and for justice.

Impunity sends a bad sign for the future. It is an element that weakens and undermines a genuine process of national reconciliation. Peace can never really be achieved until those who have committed the gravest crimes against humankind are brought to justice.

It is for this reason that we support the mandate that this resolution gives to the United Nations Mission in Liberia, within full respect for the sovereignty and legal order of Liberia and in coordination with the Government of that country, to apprehend Mr. Charles Taylor and to facilitate his transfer to the Special Court for Sierra Leone for prosecution in the event that he returns to Liberia.

I wish to reaffirm our country's position of defending the rule of law and the principles of international law in all circumstances and without exception.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5305

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5305th meeting

Tuesday, 15 November 2005, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Argentina	Mr. D'Alotto
	Benin	Mr. Idohou
	Brazil	Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Mercado
	Romania	Mr. Dumitru
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. McKenzie Smith
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mrs. Taj
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

Security Council mission

Briefing by the Head of the Security Council mission to Central Africa

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05-60401 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council mission

Briefing by the Head of the Security Council mission to Central Africa

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marc de La Sablière, head of the Security Council mission to Central Africa and Permanent Representative of France.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to welcome the return of the members of the Council and of the Secretariat who took part in the mission to Central Africa.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marc de La Sablière, in his capacity as head of the Security Council mission to Central Africa.

Mr. De La Sablière (*spoke in French*): The Security Council mission that I had the honour to lead last week in five Central African countries was an opportunity to renew the Council's support for the process of peace and national reconciliation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Burundi.

First, on behalf of all the participants in the mission, I should like once again to thank the authorities of the five countries that we visited — the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania — for the warm welcome that we received everywhere.

The report of our mission is available. Everyone can read it and become familiar with the recommendations that we have submitted to the Council. This morning, without going over it in detail, I should like to highlight certain points, particularly with regard to the main problems that we discussed with our interlocutors.

I shall first discuss our visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Everyone we met there believes that there is a momentum for transition. Everyone spoke with us about the desire of the Congolese to vote. In fact, according to the Independent Electoral Commission, the milestone of 20 million persons registered to vote has been achieved. Everyone is now looking towards the next votes — the referendum on the constitution on 18 December and the legislative and presidential elections — and the transition will end in less than eight months. That progress is commendable, as was stressed by the mission, but we also recalled that there are still significant problems to be resolved.

The first problem concerns the elections. The electoral timetable is tight. There has been some delay. The mission stressed to each of our interlocutors that it was essential that the voting take place on schedule. It is imperative that the date of 30 June 2006 be respected. The electoral law — an essential element of the operation — must therefore be considered carefully by Parliament. It must be promulgated the day after the adoption of the constitution, which — I repeat — is scheduled for 18 December. Then, it is essential that the elections be open to everyone. No one must be excluded or feel excluded from the process. In particular, measures must be taken to make up for the delays in voter registration in the provinces of Equateur and Bandundu. The Congolese authorities must also ensure that citizens are well informed.

The second problem is integrating the army and the police. Progress has been made in demobilizing ex-combatants and in restructuring the army and the police. However, that progress must continue and expand. We have asked the Congolese authorities to redouble their efforts in this area. In fact, the armed forces integration programme was interrupted after its first phase. Six brigades have been formed, whereas nine had been planned, to ensure security in the east. Our message, in keeping with our terms of reference, was that there was no more time to lose in starting the second integration phase. Moreover, measures must be taken to ensure that the new integrated brigades receive the equipment that they need. It is also essential that the Government pay the soldiers regularly and adequately.

The third problem is related to governance. Re-establishing State authority is more than ever a priority. It must be carried out with respect for the rule of law. Priority in the area of good governance must apply to the integrated brigades that I just mentioned and to the

adoption of the report of the European Union mission to provide advice and assistance for security sector reform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The mission reiterated that point several times during its interviews, particularly with the head of State, Vice-President Ruberwa and the Minister of Defence.

I now turn to the problem of armed groups in the east, which was mentioned as a main topic of concern by all the heads of State with whom we met. In the eastern Congo, everyone — beginning with President Kabila — now recognizes that the presence of armed groups is a burden, particularly on the Congolese people. Today, it is the people who are the victims of violence, atrocities and plundering. There is an obligation to act, but the problem also exists for the neighbouring countries.

The Congolese forces, with the support of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC), are now engaged in forceful action against the armed groups. These operations are courageous; I believe that they should be commended. Much was asked about this in our conversations. In Ituri, those operations are already permitting a stabilization of the situation. They have begun in the Kivus, particularly in Virunga Park. They must be continued.

We said to all our interlocutors that what the countries of the region must do, in the face of these armed groups, is to continue to strengthen their cooperation. Mechanisms already exist — such as the Tripartite Commission — and they should be utilized, particularly in order to exchange information. We recalled, in the clearest terms, the need for everyone to respect the sovereignty of neighbours. We also asked the Governments to ensure that the armed groups cannot receive cross-border support. The arms embargo must be respected. The illegal exploitation of natural resources, which finances arms trafficking, must no longer be tolerated.

In Burundi, we met a young Government, freshly elected and resolved fully to implement the reforms that were undertaken during the transitional period.

Three topics in particular predominated in our discussions. The first was the presence of the United Nations, which is now in question. Its support was decisive in achieving the transition in Burundi, as noted by the head of State and by all the officials with whom we met. But now that the transition has been completed, the question arises — quite naturally — of disengaging the mission, or of withdrawing at least its military presence. We spoke at great length with our interlocutors on this subject, and, according to my understanding, there was agreement on a gradual withdrawal. That is what the authorities of Burundi told us; that is the principle involved.

The United Nations and the legitimate authorities of the country, with full respect for the sovereignty of Burundi — as the mission frequently reiterated in its meetings — but also with a concern for peacebuilding, an issue that kept coming up in the subregion, must agree on a specific and concrete plan for gradual disengagement.

The second point relates to the role of the international community in the context of an exit strategy. There must be a successful transition from peacekeeping to peacebuilding. Above and beyond the gradual withdrawal of the United Nations Operation in Burundi, we told the Burundian authorities that we wished to see a dialogue held, under the best possible conditions, with the international community, so that together we can find the best possible way of helping Burundi.

It seems to me that the Partners Forum, created in New York two months ago, is the obvious framework for such a dialogue. But we also believe — and this wish was unanimously expressed by the members of the mission — that the Peacebuilding Commission should be set up as quickly as possible. In our talks we often spoke of the benefits that Burundi could derive from the creation of the Commission.

Finally, there is the question of the Front National de Libération (FNL). This is a topic that everyone was thinking about; it came up in all our talks. There has been great disappointment in that respect. Perhaps it is not too late for the movement to join the peace process; some people still want to believe that that is possible. In any event, it is not acceptable for the FNL to engage in acts of violence against the new democratic institutions. We understand that the Government of Burundi remains open to the resumption of negotiations. The Security Council, for its part, last year expressed its readiness to consider the imposition of sanctions, and we reminded our interlocutors that that option was still available.

If I may, I should like, in conclusion, to make a few general comments — perhaps rather personal ones — about the work of the Council, which I have been prompted to formulate as a result of this visit.

My first comment is more general. The Security Council visited Central Africa this year for the sixth time. I believe that the members of the Council were motivated once again by a concern successfully to promote the peace process in a region to which stability and lasting peace must be restored; these are pivotal to its development.

The success of the peace processes in the region is important not only for its peoples, which have suffered so much; it is important also for promoting cooperation, on a solid footing, among the countries of the region. Such cooperation, in various forums and particularly in the context of the Great Lakes Conference, is crucial in the context of stability.

Let me add that the success of our common undertaking in Central Africa is of an importance that goes well beyond the subregional level; indeed, I think that it is important for the whole of Africa. That in itself explains the Council's having visited the region every year — for six years now, I believe. It explains the significant support provided by the international community for the process. We know that United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the United Nations Office in Burundi have more than 23,000 women and men in the field. I believe that in both cases — and I think this is a positive element; certainly I found it reassuring — there is a clear-cut policy on the part of the international community, which is remarkably united in this regard.

Another cause for satisfaction is the fact that the Council's work is reflected in the field by ongoing diplomatic activities, held, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in the context of the International Committee to Accompany the Transition, which itself is a transitional entity. I say this because I think that this has more than just subregional significance. It can be applied to other crises — in Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, with the recent creation of the International Working Group.

One can see, therefore, that the Security Council, which has supported those groups, and very often has even created them, has been able to adapt and evolve. It is closer now to the field than it has ever been. I believe that this is a positive development. The fact that our colleague Kenzo Oshima went from Kinshasa to the Horn of Africa to help us better to assess the situation is an example of this evolution, which, I think, is something we should continue to promote.

Let me make one other general comment. Over the past few years, the scale and the mandate of MONUC have changed so as better to take into account the situation in the field and to remedy deficiencies and shortcomings. Today in Burundi we need, together with the authorities, to consider a gradual withdrawal. It seems to me that, with the assistance of the Secretary-General and of Mr. Guéhenno and his team, we should, whenever necessary, when a mandate is being renewed, really think about the changes that need to be made and what needs to be adjusted. Of course, we are not talking about change for change's sake. Very often mandates simply should be renewed unchanged. But it seems to me that we need to cultivate the Council's capacity for adaptation.

I would like to conclude by thanking my Council colleagues who took part in the mission for the trust that they placed in me throughout our trip and for their indulgence, even though very often — with their consent, of course — I set for them a very heavy workload.

On behalf of all members of the mission, I thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Council secretariat team, which was strengthened in order to carry out the mission and to meet the needs of security, logistics and communications. Without them, without Carolyn McAskie and Bill Swing, to whom we should pay tribute for their work, and without the teams assembled on the ground to assist the Security Council, we could not have carried out this mission successfully in the period of barely a week.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Ambassador De La Sablière for his briefing.

On behalf of the Council, I should like once again to express gratitude and appreciation to all the members of the Security Council mission, very ably led by Ambassador De La Sablière, for the manner in which they discharged their important responsibilities on behalf of the Council.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of this matter.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5306

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5306th meeting

Tuesday, 15 November 2005, 10.35 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. El Hadj Ali
	Argentina	Mr. D'Alotto
	Benin	Mr. Idohou
	Brazil	Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Haneda
	Philippines	Mr. Mercado
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mrs. Taj
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 7 November 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2005/706)

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05-60407 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 7 November 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2005/706)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Italy, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Prica (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Spatafora (Italy) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Lord Paddy Ashdown, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Lord Ashdown to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2005/706, which contains a letter dated 7 November 2005 from the Secretary-General transmitting the twenty-eighth report of the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

At this morning's meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Lord Paddy Ashdown, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina. As this is the last briefing that Lord Ashdown will make to the Council in his capacity as the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, I would like, on behalf of the members of the Council, to express our appreciation to Lord Ashdown for his important contribution to strengthening peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I now give the floor to Lord Ashdown.

Lord Ashdown: I thank you, Mr. President, for your kind words.

As you have pointed out, Sir, my report has been submitted to the Security Council. I shall therefore endeavour to simply add supplementary comments in the briefing I am about to give.

Seven months ago, when I last spoke to the Council (see S/PV.5147), I said that I believed that the following period — namely, the period immediately after that report — would be decisive. Would the political leadership of Bosnia and Herzegovina seize the opportunity to show that the country had become a viable State that was irreversibly on course to European and Euro-Atlantic integration, or would it lose that opportunity? Some six or seven months later, the answer is clear: they did not reject that opportunity; they took it. That period was decisive and the country has now moved a step forward towards the next phase of its development.

The Council has before it our detailed report on developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2005/706, annex). However, things have moved on considerably since that report was submitted. There is a huge difference between where Bosnia and Herzegovina stood in June and where it now stands, just a week away from the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Dayton Peace Accords. Bosnia and Herzegovina has done what many said was impossible even a year ago, let alone at the start of my mandate, in May 2002 — or even further away, on the date that the Dayton Peace Agreements were signed. The country now stands at the gates that lead to the long path towards membership in the European Union.

European Union foreign ministers announced on 8 November that they welcomed the recommendation from the European Commission to start drawing up a negotiating mandate for Bosnia and Herzegovina's stabilization and association agreement. What that means is that, if all goes according to plan, the stabilization and association process negotiations will be approved at the 21 November meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Brussels, precisely a full 10 years after the Dayton-Paris Agreements were signed. The Council may consider that to be a fitting anniversary present. When that happens Bosnia and Herzegovina will join the rest of the region on the journey towards accession to the European Union. I believe that that is truly a remarkable achievement for a country as war-torn as Bosnia and Herzegovina was just 10 years ago.

As you have pointed out, Mr. President, this is my last report to the Security Council as High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina. In addition to updating the Council on the highlights of the reporting period, I hope the Council will not think it an abuse of this opportunity if I were to share my impressions about how far Bosnia and Herzegovina has come in the last three years and, above all, in the last 10.

May I first take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General personally and the Security Council for the enormous support that I have received during the three and a half years of my mandate.

Ten years after Bosnia and Herzegovina's brutal war, the country has acquired the framework — and I would underscore that it is a framework, and not yet the substance — of a modern European State. I think that the scale of that achievement can be judged if we cast our minds back to Bosnia and Herzegovina 10 years ago, in 1995, with a people traumatized by mass murder and ethnic cleansing, contending with the material deprivation wrought by a collapsed infrastructure and burdened with a completely moribund economy. I therefore think that in that period — measured against other peace stabilization missions — progress has been real, substantial and, in some cases, even miraculous. But I want to stress that I think that has been utterly dependent not just on the international community's efforts but also on the unbelievable fortitude, hard work and good sense of the ordinary people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. They are the true heroes of that transformation.

At the start of 2005 Bosnia and Herzegovina stood at a crossroads. For much of the year it was, frankly, unclear and uncertain which direction the country would take. In June progress appeared, to put it bluntly, to have stalled. Obstructionism — particularly, but not exclusively, from the Republika Srpska Government — was rife. Most key State-level reforms appeared at that stage to be blocked. Carla Del Ponte, Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) had highlighted the need to tackle systemic weaknesses in Bosnia and Herzegovina's security institutions. Although defence reform proceeded, despite repeated efforts by the international community and the Council of Ministers to find a way around the impasse, the Republika Srpska still refused to agree to push forward with police restructuring. Most important, at that date, the failure to agree to police reform and the blockage by the Croat National Union (HDZ) of the passage of the public broadcasting legislation meant that the remaining requirements for Bosnia and Herzegovina to begin stabilization and association negotiations with the European Union remained unfulfilled at that point. Thus, when Serbia and Montenegro met the conditions of the European Union's feasibility study on 5 October, Bosnia and Herzegovina became the only country in the Balkans that had no contractual relationship with the European Union.

The last time I addressed the Council I said that seasoned observers had a right to be sceptical about the prospects for a change of heart on the part of the Republika Srpska leadership. Well, scepticism is always the safe default position in the Balkans. But perhaps scepticism about the prospects of success was particularly appropriate in June of this year. But I am happy to report to the Council that that blockage has now been removed: we have now moved decisively into more promising territory.

Thanks to a combination of some enlightened local leadership — perhaps especially in the Republika Srpska — and consistent pressure from the international community, the major obstacles to Euro-Atlantic integration have now been overcome. Frankly, defence reform has succeeded beyond all our expectations. A consensus has been built, and maintained, that has enabled the transfer of all defence responsibilities and personnel to the State, as well as the abolition of conscription and the establishment of a small reserve force to back up the downsized

professional army. The three former armies of Bosnia and Herzegovina are therefore now on the way to being melded into a single, NATO-compatible military force of some 12,000 members under, as it happens, one Bosnian Serb defence minister. Let me pay tribute to Nikola Radovanović, Minister for Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who has been a major contributor to that process. He has fulfilled his duties with remarkable skill and is, I believe, one of the most capable of the ministers now emerging from Bosnia and Herzegovina's political strata.

But whereas the armed forces are essentially once removed from popular perceptions of day-to-day security, the police, on the other hand, are viewed by many as the day-to-day protectors of the local community. Whether you trust the police or not will determine where and in which community you are prepared to live. That is an issue that, apart from anything else, has a direct bearing on refugee returns and on reconciliation. Police reform was therefore always going to be much more sensitive and much more difficult.

The European Union, backed by the international community — and if I may, I should like to pay a special tribute to the work of the United States here — made it very clear that the remaining conditions for Bosnia and Herzegovina to begin the stabilization talks were non-negotiable and not about to change. They included police reform. The breakthrough on police reform that came in October occurred, in my view, because the international community held to a solid and united position, and Bosnia and Herzegovina's leaders grasped the meaning of that and were not prepared to risk isolation and exclusion from the European process. Bluntly put, when they realized that we were serious, they got serious.

The entity and State parliaments have, as a result, now endorsed a political agreement on police restructuring in line with the European Commission's three basic principles. Once implemented — and I do not want to underestimate the task of implementation, because that will be difficult too, and it must be fully implemented — that agreement will provide the basis for a modern and effective State-level police force, free from political interference and working without the constraints of ethnic boundaries.

I will not pretend that it has been easy to get where we are today. The aspiration of European Union membership has been a powerful draw, but it has taken consistent and united pressure from the international community over the last 10 years, together with leadership from Bosnia and Herzegovina's political bodies, to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina finally to the gates of the European Union and NATO membership through the Partnership for Peace.

Nowhere has that been clearer than in the area of ICTY cooperation. When I spoke to the Council in March, I welcomed the progress that had been made on ICTY cooperation. Today, I can welcome even more. Today, only five of the 15 major indictees indicted for war crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina are still at large. The Republika Srpska authorities — and I commend them for it — have transferred or assisted Belgrade in the transfer of 12 indictees this year. That is huge step forward, given the fact that, by 1 January, the Republika Srpska authorities had transferred not a single Hague indictee to The Hague for a full nine years. In the intervening months, some 12 have been so transferred.

However, another anniversary of the massacre at Srebrenica — the tenth — has now passed without the transfer of the two most wanted on that list: Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic. We need to signal, on this tenth anniversary of Dayton, our utter determination to ensure that this chapter of Bosnia and Herzegovina's history is closed. Without the transfer of Karadzic and Mladic, justice will not have been done and the Balkans will not be able to enter fully this new, European phase of its history. Bosnia and Herzegovina's future can be built only on justice, on truth, on accountability and, ultimately, on reconciliation, and that cannot happen until Karadzic and Mladic are where they should be — facing the charges laid against them before The Hague Tribunal.

Other small steps have been taken, and some not so small. One, for instance, is in the case of Mostar. This time last year, I reported on the reopening of the Mostar bridge, a powerful symbol of reconciliation. At the end of this month, the Office of the High Representative's unit dedicated to supporting the reintegration of Mostar will be closed, having successfully completed its work. Most of Mostar's municipal institutions have now been unified or are in the process of being unified. A majority of local civil service positions have now been filled under the new, European Union-standard Civil Service Law. Nevertheless, a small but worrying number of the most

sensitive issues, such as street names and the ownership of the local Croat television station, have still to be resolved. They must be resolved, and soon. It would be a blot on Mostar's progress towards unity if its politicians were unable to resolve those issues.

So, there is more work still to be done, and I regret to have to report to the Council that hardliners in Mostar continue to try to disrupt the process by continuing to place the interests of ethnic division above the interests of Mostar and its long-suffering citizens. Nevertheless, considerable progress has been made. I think I can say that, despite those last, yet-to-be-completed tasks, the process in Mostar and elsewhere has proved that there is far more that unites the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina today than divides them.

The opening of stabilization and association negotiations this year will mark a decisive break, I believe, with the past. The key is whether or not the opportunities created by the launch of the stabilization and association process will be seized. In my view, the two key words for the future phase are sustainability and functionality. They are now the watchwords. The last 12 months have demonstrated that there is the political will to meet the requirements of Euro-Atlantic integration, but in many cases, perhaps in most, the really hard part of the reform process — its implementation — is only now beginning.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is, I think, now moving decisively from the phase of peace implementation to the marathon task of establishing good governance and the achievement of European standards on the way to full European membership. That is something that the international community cannot do for Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is not our job. Our job is to enable — to create viable institutions and place them in a coherent legislative and practical framework, but it is up to the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina to make those institutions work and to expand and strengthen that State framework.

In that context, there has been much talk of the relevance of the Dayton Constitution. There is, I think, now a growing consensus that the Dayton construct in its present form, while remaining essential as a foundation for peace, has nevertheless reached the end of its utility as a framework for the next phase of the reform process. Bosnia and Herzegovina needs now to consider the post-Dayton era and to find a new template, within the European stability and association process, to move forward in the next phase.

I subscribe to that general view. Dayton achieved what it was designed to achieve, and it is remarkable how successful it was. It ended the war and it established a framework in which post-war recovery could begin. Those are significant, perhaps even remarkable achievements for an agreement which, I think, was universally predicted to fail in the months after it was first drawn up. Dayton did not fail; it has succeeded. It now needs, in my view, to be adapted in order to reflect the extent of Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress towards a normal and prosperous European future. Dayton will remain our foundation, but we need to think beyond Dayton to what happens next.

This is not a question just of Euro-Atlantic integration. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina are entitled to demand a Government that is accountable and efficient, and no State can win the loyalty of its citizens when it spends 70 per cent of their taxes on Government and only 30 per cent on the citizens' services. Constitutional change is now possible and necessary, in my view, and that is the next phase that we must now enter. It is important here, however, to underline that this cannot be imposed by the international community; it cannot be imposed by one people over the other two; it cannot be imposed by two over the third. It has to be reached through the domestic institutions and through a process of consensus.

But if constitutional change is now possible and necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina, then so is a fundamental change in the role of the international community itself. The signing of the stabilization and association agreement should, I believe, herald the end of heavyweight international intervention in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is time for the international community to take a step back. Our posture should turn from one of pushing reform to one of supporting and enabling it. The Peace Implementation Council has, at my recommendation, made it clear that once the stabilization and association negotiations are under way, it is ready to begin phasing out the use of the Bonn Powers and replacing the Office of the High Representative with a structure led by the European Union Special Representative. That transition could begin before the end of this year and might be completed, if all goes well, by the time Bosnia and Herzegovina goes to the polls in October 2006.

I believe that the Bonn Powers have worked. They have worked in levering the country forward to this point, doing so at reasonable pace, consistent with the reform process and what the system will bear. But the Bonn Powers — let us recognize it — have also created a dangerous dependency, both in the Bosnia and Herzegovina political establishment and, to be very blunt, in the international community, too. It is time to wean Bosnia — and ourselves — off them by a progressive process that hands democratic power over to democratic sovereign institutions and provides the space for proper political opposition and a strong civil society to grow.

That does not mean that the international community or the Peace Implementation Council should disengage. Bosnia and Herzegovina still needs our concerted support, including of the support of the non-European Union countries that have helped to steer it over the past 10 years. It still needs the European Union force (EUFOR), which, since its deployment at the beginning of 2005, has established itself as an efficient and credible force.

There remain major outstanding challenges that require continued engagement, commitment and allocation of resources by the international community. A good example of that continuing need for resources can be found in the judicial and penal system. The rehabilitation of the police forces and judiciary is now genuinely beginning to pay dividends. I should remind the Council that just two weeks ago, the Bosnia and Herzegovina security institutions successfully mounted a very delicate and difficult operation against potential suicide bombers transiting through Bosnia. That demonstrates just how far the security institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina have come and how much Bosnia and Herzegovina is taking its international responsibilities seriously, as well as the necessity to continue to keep vigilant on this front.

With increasing numbers of criminals being brought to justice, and some war crimes cases now being transferred from The Hague to the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, that country is faced with the problem that there is simply no prison in which to incarcerate those who are convicted. There will be a donors conference in February, and I hope that that will take a step towards rectifying that problem.

There is also — and I regret to have to raise this again — the outstanding issue of police decertification, which we have discussed on many previous occasions when I have reported to the Council. I understand that the Council may give consideration to setting up a review of the police certification process conducted by the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF). I encourage the Council, as I have over the past two years, to do that without delay.

The certification of police officers by the IPTF was an ambitious and largely successful attempt to rehabilitate the ranks of police officers in Bosnia and Herzegovina, many of whom had been compromised by involvement in criminal activities during and after the war. When the process was concluded at the end of 2004, regrettably no provision was made for reviewing problematic decisions where credible evidence exists that the right procedures were not followed. The Venice Commission very recently commented on that and called for a review process to be established. I agree with it. A review mechanism would consolidate the certification process by overturning or confirming decisions that currently raise questions about the process as a whole.

I hope that you will forgive me, Mr. President, for offering a few final reflections as I prepare to depart my role as High Representative.

Thirteen years ago, I stood on the tarmac of the Sarajevo airfield, then held by the United Nations, watching a murderous artillery duel take place over our heads, smashing into the beauty of Sarajevo and the wonderful valley in which it sits. My relationship with Bosnia and Herzegovina started on that hot August day. That relationship has taken me on a long, long journey, one that eventually led me to my past three and a half years as High Representative. I feel deeply honoured to have had the privilege to work with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina in helping to rebuild their country and putting Bosnia firmly on the path to Euro-Atlantic integration.

Bosnia and Herzegovina will continue to demand a unique approach from the international community — an approach that combines the prospect of European Union accession with an energetic, proactive and comprehensive engagement. We will continue to need to offer bespoke solutions for the very complex challenges that this country continues to pose. And we will need to pull all those elements together as a determined team.

I do not want in any way to underestimate how far there is to go. But Bosnia has already come through the most difficult part of its long journey. In the end, how those challenges are going to be resolved will not be up to the international community. But it will be up to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I shall watch developments with interest and, I confess, with love for a country to which I have grown deeply attached, and which, I am absolutely certain, will one day be a member of the family of European Union nations and regarded as one of its little jewels.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Lord Ashdown for his statement.

Mrs. Taj (United Republic of Tanzania): My delegation expresses its appreciation to Lord Paddy Ashdown, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, for his update on the situation in that country and for his written report, which is before us. We pay tribute to the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the remarkable progress that they have made towards integration into the European Union. As we have just heard from Lord Ashdown, it is almost the tenth anniversary of the Dayton Agreement.

We welcome the positive developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, particularly the reforms designed to improve the business environment and regulate the fiscal system so as to increase economic stability. We are also impressed by the achievements of the European Union peacekeeping force in implementing its mandate after successfully taking over from the NATO force. It is encouraging to note that the defence reform is proceeding well.

My delegation is also encouraged by the steps taken by the authorities of the Republika Srpska in surrendering, for the first time, several indictees to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) at The Hague. However, we are disappointed by their lack of full cooperation with the ICTY, which lack continues to ensure the freedom of its most wanted indictees, Karadzic and Mladic. As pointed out in the Secretary-General's report and confirmed by Lord Paddy Ashdown, those two persons are among the most wanted fugitives still on the ICTY's list, and they still enjoy protection by the authorities of the Republika Srpska. In this regard, we urge the Republika Srpska, the neighbouring countries and the whole region to extend maximum cooperation with the ICTY so that the remaining indictees do not escape justice.

We share the concerns of the Secretary-General on the lack of progress on police reform. The Serbian side is reportedly rejecting the fundamental principles, endorsed by the European Union, on which the reform is based, including the abolition of the Republika Srpska police. By so doing, they are not only alienating themselves, but are obstructing progress on police reform, causing a stalemate and an unnecessary delay in building a single State in Bosnia and Herzegovina as it prepares itself to join the European Union. It is inconceivable to imagine a State with more than one police force. We thus call upon the Republika Srpska to avoid divisive policies and to join with others in Bosnia and Herzegovina to build the future of their country together. We also urge it to cooperate with the High Representative in the review of the law on salaries so as to develop a single system covering all State employees.

Finally, we pay tribute to the High Representative and the European Union force for the good work that they are doing in Bosnia and Herzegovina and for their patience and perseverance in introducing and following up on a range of reforms designed to bring about sustainable peace and development in the country, most of which are progressing according to plan. We also recognize the important role played by the European Union, NATO and other friends and partners of Bosnia and Herzegovina in assisting the country to leave its tragic history behind and march towards prosperity.

Mr. Li Junhua (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): At the outset, I wish to thank the High Representative, Lord Ashdown, for his comprehensive and complete briefing. We greatly appreciate the efforts he has made as the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are pleased to note that since the second half of last year, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made positive efforts and has achieved remarkable results in strengthening institution-building, achieving economic recovery, completing its judicial system and police reform, and facilitating national reconciliation. We greatly appreciate the fact that the Office of the High Representative has played a positive role in that regard.

The European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR) smoothly took over responsibilities from the Stabilization Force (SFOR)

and demonstrated its capabilities in supporting the political process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome the further contributions made by the European Union (EU) in the political process and in helping maintain the stability of the country.

In the 10 years since the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement, through the efforts by Bosnia and Herzegovina and the parties involved and with the assistance of the international community, the country has made encouraging progress in various aspects of national reconstruction. The parties involved should greatly value that hard-won achievement. We hope that the country and the parties involved will further strengthen their mutual trust and unity in order to gradually lead the country's people of various ethnic minorities to peaceful coexistence and shared development.

We hope that Lord Ashdown will bring even better news to his next meeting with the Council, and China will continue its efforts in that regard.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I have the honour to speak also on behalf of the European Union. Bulgaria, Romania, Turkey, Iceland, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine align themselves with this statement.

The year 2005 is particularly significant for Bosnia and Herzegovina. Ten years ago next week the Dayton Peace Agreement was initialled, bringing bitter fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina to an end and establishing the constitutional structures of the country we know today.

Bosnia and Herzegovina today stands at the threshold of another, new chapter in its history. In Brussels next week, we expect the European Union to agree formally to open negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina on a stabilization and association agreement. The conclusion of those negotiations will establish a formal, contractual relationship between the European Union and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

For Bosnia, that marks the first step on the long path to eventual membership of the European Union. It also demonstrates that the European Union is determined to deliver on the Thessaloniki agenda: the commitment that all the countries of the Western Balkans are potential members of the European Union provided that they meet the necessary conditions. The opening of negotiations on a stabilization and association agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina will also mean that all the countries of the region will have concluded, or be negotiating, formal contractual relations with the European Union.

We have heard just how far Bosnia and Herzegovina has come in 10 years. That is underlined by the other anniversary commemorated this year — that of the massacre at Srebrenica of some 8,000 Bosnian Muslim men and boys in July 1995. We must never forget what happened at Srebrenica. Nor can we forget what happened to Bosnian Muslims, Croats and Serbs in countless other towns and villages all over Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is for that reason that a fundamental condition of Bosnia and Herzegovina's further progress towards membership of the European Union is the requirement to cooperate fully with the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, including the apprehension and transfer of all fugitive indictees, in particular Karadzic and Mladic.

The fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has come so far in 10 years is a testament to the enormous political, financial and military investment by the international community, including the European Union, and to the efforts of the Bosnians themselves.

It is also a testament to the efforts of Lord Ashdown, who, as High Representative and European Union Special Representative, has been tireless in assisting Bosnia and Herzegovina to drive through the significant reforms that we have seen over the last three and a half years. We believe that the European Union, the wider international community and particularly Bosnia and Herzegovina all owe Lord Ashdown a debt of gratitude. He leaves Bosnia and Herzegovina on the threshold of a new chapter in its history and better able to face the challenges ahead.

As European Union Special Representative, Lord Ashdown has played an important role in coordinating the work of various European Union instruments deployed in support of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The particular strength of the EU is the potential to bring to bear its financial, political and military instruments in support of one objective in this case — to support Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic integration.

We are very clear. We believe that Lord Ashdown used his powers as High Representative effectively, but we also recognize that he was sometimes criticized for

usurping the role of democratic institutions. That approach was necessary at a time when institutions needed the sort of push that would cause them to move forward. But, as Lord Ashdown has described, it is now time for the relationship to evolve, and with it the style of the High Representative, in order to allow Bosnia to stand on its own two feet and for us to end the dependency culture and allow Bosnia to flourish. That means that we should move away from the commanding approach to one of support.

Working in the closest cooperation with the NATO presence, the European Union Force has successfully assumed the main peace stabilization role under the Dayton Peace Agreement. The European Union Police Mission has provided advice and support to Bosnia and Herzegovina in its efforts to bring its own police structures up to the expected standards. The EU continues to provide significant financial support to Bosnia and Herzegovina under the Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilization assistance programme.

As the High Representative acknowledged, Bosnia and Herzegovina has come a long way — perhaps the longer part of its journey. But it still has much work to do in implementing the reforms and meeting the benchmarks, which are basic to integration within the European Union. Many of the challenges that Bosnia and Herzegovina faces are a legacy of the years of conflict. It will require determination and resolve on the part of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to overcome them once and for all. But let us be clear: the European Union's commitment to continuing to support them in their efforts is evident and will be maintained.

Mr. Haneda (Japan): Sir, I thank you for convening this public meeting concerning the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I join previous speakers in offering my thanks to the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lord Paddy Ashdown, for his comprehensive briefing and would like to pay tribute to Lord Ashdown for his dedicated service over the last three and a half years.

Japan welcomes the European Union (EU) decision to approve initiation of the stabilization and association agreement negotiation with Bosnia and Herzegovina last week in the year marking the tenth anniversary of the signing of the Dayton Agreement. We recognize that Bosnia and Herzegovina has now entered a new stage in its development, moving from post-conflict rehabilitation towards integration into the EU.

The remarkable developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina during the past 10 years could not have been achieved without the tireless efforts of the people and political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the High Representative and his staff and the entire international community. The Government of Japan would like to commend, in particular, the splendid leadership of Lord Ashdown in that regard.

These achievements notwithstanding, there is still much to be done in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It is necessary to resolve the remaining problems, so that Bosnia and Herzegovina will be able to stand on its own feet. To that end, we expect the political leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina, with the cooperation of the international community, to take the initiative to ensure further progress in the most urgent tasks, such as the restructuring of police, cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) process, downsizing of the total Government structure of Bosnia and Herzegovina and further reform of the economy.

Japan has been actively contributing to the peace implementation process in Bosnia and Herzegovina as a member of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council. Currently, our assistance projects are focused on three objectives. These are, first, enhancement of the market economy; secondly, improving the environment; and thirdly, consolidation of peace. As part of the efforts to follow up the Ministerial Conference on Peace Consolidation and Economic Development of the Western Balkans, held in Tokyo in April 2004, Japan co-hosted with Bosnia and Herzegovina and the United Nations Development Programme the second Regional Conference on Tourism Development in the Western Balkans last month in Sarajevo.

Japan, working with the international community, intends to follow up on its commitment to the process of achieving stability and prosperity in this region through the aforementioned cooperative activities. It is our firm belief that stabilization of the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina is essential for the stability of the whole of south-eastern Europe.

Mr. Mercado (Philippines): The Philippines would like to thank Lord Paddy Ashdown for his final

briefing to the Council on the developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to commend him for his tireless efforts over the last three and a half years on the implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are pleased to note that, as Lord Ashdown is about to end his present mandate, Bosnia and Herzegovina has made significant progress on political and economic structural reforms, particularly in the area of State law enforcement, fiscal matters, legislation and defence.

We note in particular the increasing economic stability achieved during the reporting period, brought about by, among others, the reforms initiated by the High Representative to improve the business environment and the fiscal system in order to create an environment conducive to job creation.

The effective operations of the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR) following the transfer of authority from the NATO-led Stabilization Force (SFOR) less than a year ago is also commendable. The importance of a safe and secure environment as a vital element in supporting political and economic reforms after conflict cannot be overemphasized. Thus, the presence of EUFOR is a testament to deepening European Union (EU) commitment to contribute to the maintenance of a safe and secure environment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The continuing contribution of its robust force should be preserved.

Bosnia and Herzegovina should also be commended for the notable process it has made towards achieving the objectives of the international community's efforts to pursue Euro-Atlantic integration and establish contractual relationships with both the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has also substantially improved since the establishment of the ICTY Monitoring Group early this year. This was evident with the surrender and transfer of several indictees to The Hague this year. We hope that Bosnia and Herzegovina will eventually be able to remove the stumbling block to its membership in NATO's Partnership for Peace — that is, the apprehension of the two most-wanted fugitives, Mladic and Karadzic.

We are gratified to hear from the High Representative that the obstacles posed by Republika Srpska police reform have been overcome and the way is now open for Bosnia and Herzegovina to begin stabilization and association agreement talks.

In this connection, we are also pleased to learn of the EU foreign ministers' decision to welcome the European Commission's recommendation to start drawing up and negotiating a mandate for a Bosnia and Herzegovina Stabilization and Association Agreement.

A decade after the Dayton peace Agreement, Bosnia and Herzegovina now stands at the gates opening to the path to integration. The international community looks forward to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina's achieving its objective of forming a better, prosperous and democratic future in the family of nations. The positive developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina should be further pursued, and greater efforts at compromise should be exerted by its leaders to overcome the hurdle of the remaining challenges that impede its Euro-Atlantic integration.

Lastly, we agree with the High Representative that much still needs to be done and that Bosnia and Herzegovina still needs concerted support, both from EU and non-EU countries. At the same time, we also believe that Bosnia and Herzegovina leaders should continue to demonstrate the political will to fulfil their responsibilities to their constituents and the international community. The sooner Bosnia and Herzegovina conforms to European democratic and legal systems, the earlier its citizens will enjoy the benefits of Euro-Atlantic integration.

Mr. Motoc (Romania) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I wish to associate myself fully with the statement made by the Ambassador of the United Kingdom in his capacity as President of the European Union (EU). I also wish to thank Lord Ashdown for his very interesting briefing, which serves to supplement a very instructive and comprehensive report. I would like to take this opportunity to convey to him our great gratitude and appreciation for his outstanding and, I would say, memorable work in Sarajevo.

I wish also to place on record our appreciation for the activities of the European Union Force in Bosnia and Herzegovina (EUFOR). This force has successfully played a key role in stabilizing the peace, in keeping with the terms of the Dayton agreement, in cooperation with the presence of NATO.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a country of importance to Romania. We pay the greatest possible attention to its stability, its development and the full implementation of the Dayton agreement, as well as the vital reforms required for its European integration. Having said this, we are glad to learn the good news about Sarajevo and, more particularly, the opening and negotiations on a Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union. This progress is, to a large extent, the result stemming from the endeavours and resolve of the people and Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the outstanding work done by Lord Ashdown and his Office, along with the constant support of the European Union, NATO and other international organizations.

Ever since Romania began serving in the Security Council, it has constantly underscored the potential for peacemaking and change inherent in European and Euro-Atlantic rapprochement for the Western Balkans. The success seen thus far in Bosnia and Herzegovina is convincing confirmation of this point of view.

In this context, we see very clearly that Bosnia and Herzegovina is making palpable progress in all areas that are important for State cohesion. This shows that Bosnia and Herzegovina is still on the right path. Of course, much still remains to be done, and consequently we encourage the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities to speed up the necessary reforms in these areas. The only way to become integrated into the European Union and NATO is by establishing a modern State based on the rule of law, reform of the economy and the strengthening of institutional capacities, internal stability and good-neighbourly relations.

Here, I should like to underscore that full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia remains a basic milestone on Bosnia and Herzegovina's road towards membership in NATO and the European Union.

Romania is also interested in progress made and progress planned in strengthening the police force and in combating organized crime.

We welcome the strength of Bosnia and Herzegovina's regional cooperation activities, including in the context of the Southeast European Cooperation Initiative. Romania is also developing sustained cooperation with Bosnia and Herzegovina on the political and economic levels, having as well a presence in the country in terms of soldiers and police officers participating in the international forces.

Ten years after the Dayton Peace Agreement, we hope that Bosnia and Herzegovina can once and for all put the years of conflict behind it, while still recalling the tragic lessons of Srebrenica, as the representative of the United Kingdom rightly said, and that the country will be able decisively to commit itself to the common European destiny as described at the Thessaloniki Summit.

Mr. Brencick (United States of America): I offer special thanks to High Representative Ashdown for his insightful briefing to the Council this morning.

In the 10 years since the end of the war and the signing of the Dayton Accords, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina have accomplished a great deal, as Lord Ashdown has pointed out. Their country is today a land at peace. Over 1 million refugees have returned to their homes. Significant progress is being made on strengthening or creating State institutions, including the establishment of a State Border Service, a State Investigation and Protection Agency and a national intelligence service, as well as in reaching agreement on a process to reform national police structures. As a result of these reforms and others, Bosnia and Herzegovina has received approval from the European Union to begin negotiating its stabilization and association agreement and has also met important criteria, as has been noted, for participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace.

I want to emphasize that most of these reforms have occurred during High Representative Ashdown's tenure in office and were accomplished in large measure, in our view, due to his tireless support for and dedication to the reform process in Bosnia.

Another area where we have seen progress and where we want to encourage more is on constitutional reform, and in this I agree fully with what Lord Ashdown has said. Constitutional reform is the next great challenge for the people of Bosnia, and we will support their efforts to eliminate duplicative governmental structures, to break down ethnic and political divisions and to build a sustainable State.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has taken some notable steps on International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) cooperation, as has been noted. But critical deficiencies remain. As called for in numerous

Security Council resolutions, all persons indicted by the ICTY must be arrested and surrendered to the court in The Hague, particularly Karadzic and Mladic. Close to 10 years after the end of the war, it is long past time to resolve this issue at last and put it to rest. The tenth anniversary of the tragedy of Srebrenica has already passed and the tenth anniversary of Dayton is next week, so further delay is unacceptable.

Mr. El Hadj Ali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): First, I should like to join in thanking the High Representative, Lord Ashdown, for his report (S/2005/706, annex), as well as for his praiseworthy efforts in his mission to follow up on the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is undeniable in the light of information provided in the briefing that we have just heard that the stabilization and normalization process, which has been under way for 10 years in Bosnia and Herzegovina, has been able to achieve some encouraging results in terms of mobilizing the international community for the implementation of the Peace Agreement in the region. Here, we are pleased to note the efforts made by the Bosnian authorities in the areas of institutional and administrative reforms, in promoting a State based on the rule of law and good governance as well as the establishment of a single economic space.

Such changes, made in depth in a number of areas of public life in Bosnia and Herzegovina, demonstrate the significant advances made in harmonizing standards set with a view to the launching of negotiations with the European Union on concluding a stabilization and association agreement and negotiations on participation in the NATO Partnership for Peace Programme. The prospect of opening negotiations on association with the European Union has prompted the establishment of a single economic space throughout the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as significant progress in terms of macroeconomic stability. However, the economic reforms undertaken in this area have far from succeeded in meeting the expectations of the local population, which deserve full attention and assistance from the international community in general, and from the European Union in particular.

We are also of the view that strengthening the legal framework by establishing new bodies in that sphere and by improving the operation and the effectiveness of the judicial system are also encouraging results, which are helping to entrench the rule of law and combat the threats of major and organized crime and of terrorism.

But the progress made in judicial system reform must not conceal the shortcomings that remain in terms of relations with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, or in terms of the arrest of those who have been accused of war crimes. Full and complete cooperation with that international judicial body and the bringing of all perpetrators of war crimes to justice would, in our view, help promote reconciliation and harmony —among all the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, would help implement a tolerant, multi-ethnic society and would aid in integrating the country into its regional environment.

We are pleased to note the significant progress made in reunifying the city of Mostar, which symbolizes, in more ways than one, the values of tolerance and peaceful coexistence, values which must underpin the entire peace process in the region.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I should like to join others in thanking High Representative, Lord Ashdown, for his interesting briefing. He has given us impressive and detailed accounts of the notable advances being achieved on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Next week marks the tenth anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement. In those 10 years, Bosnia and Herzegovina has achieved remarkable progress. Although a number of challenges still remain, we are committed to ensuring that the days of war, destruction and massacres are gone for good in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the Western Balkans as a whole.

I would like to associate myself with the statement by the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union (EU). I limit myself to three points. First, we are particularly encouraged by the recent adoption of the police restructuring bill and, earlier this year, the defence sector reform. Those reforms represent key benchmarks in Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress towards Euro-Atlantic integration. We expect, therefore, that the European Union will formally agree to open negotiations on a stabilization and association agreement — the first step towards eventual EU membership.

Progress has also been significant on the path towards membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Partnership for Peace Programme. Cooperation towards that end between the authorities in Sarajevo and the NATO mission is commendable.

Secondly, moving towards association with the EU and NATO will also require further reform by our partners in Sarajevo. Full implementation of the bill restructuring the police force will be important. Furthermore, adoption and implementation of legislation on public broadcasting and full cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) will also be key factors in determining further progress in relations with the EU and NATO. Bosnia and Herzegovina — as indeed all countries of the Western Balkans — needs to take decisive action and bring remaining persons indicted for war crimes to justice, most notably Ratko Mladic and Radovan Karadzic. Only then will the remaining legacy of war in the Western Balkans be buried — a precondition for lasting reconciliation in the region.

Thirdly and finally, we commend the High Representative, Lord Ashdown, for all his efforts over the past three and a half years. Lord Ashdown has played a key role in the progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He has been a catalyst for visible progress, while maintaining the delicate balance between — on the one hand, using proactively his Bonn Powers — and, on the other hand, ensuring a gradual transfer of responsibility and political ownership to the political leaders in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We support the gradual downsizing of the Office of the High Representative. But the job is not yet finished. While we may be contemplating adjustments to the Bonn Powers, we should do so in a measured way and with due attention to the risks of new crises in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Denmark remains committed to assist as best we can, as Bosnia and Herzegovina and indeed the whole Western Balkan region continues its journey towards stability and democracy. I think we all sense the strong commitment of the Government and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to take charge in forming a better, more prosperous and democratic future together. We strongly welcome and support that.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin by thanking Lord Ashdown for his briefing. I would also like to pay tribute to the outstanding job he has done throughout his term in office. The progress we are witnessing today owes a great deal to his tireless dedication. I think we can state assuredly without mistake, that, without him, Bosnia and Herzegovina would not have made so much progress in its process of rejoining Europe.

Ten years after the signing of the peace agreement, relations among the three peoples concerned have greatly improved. The large number of returned refugees, the growing improvement in relations with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the inquiry by the Republika Srpska into the Srebrenica massacre and the absence of all ethnic and inter-ethnic violence are all signs that Bosnia and Herzegovina is putting conflict behind itself and becoming a stable and democratic State, moving closer towards meeting the standards and values of Europe.

The progress made over the past two years in building a central unified State has been remarkable. Important reforms have been implemented and have made it possible for the country to become unified economically. Central institutions in the main governmental sectors — including defence, justice, taxation and public broadcasting — have helped to launch the process of European integration for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The latest significant reform — the law concerning the police — has just overcome its last obstacle with the vote of 5 October of the National Assembly of the Republika Srpska. With the establishment of the principle of an integrated police force for Bosnia and Herzegovina, that reform has made it possible to meet the last requirement for the opening of negotiations with the European Union concerning a stabilization and association agreement, which should be in place by the end of the year. That is a major step forwards towards building a stable and democratic Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Once again, we pay tribute to the activities of the High Representative, who has played a decisive role in bringing about the success of the negotiations. However, that process should not encourage us to diminish our efforts. Bosnia and Herzegovina has not yet completed either its process of reconciliation or its

integration with Europe. First, its efforts to cooperate fully with the Tribunal must be continued and strengthened. The arrest and transfer of all accused persons to The Hague — in particular Karadzic and Mladic — is essential in order to satisfy both its international obligations and its own needs to complete the reconciliation process.

The reform of the defence forces and the police, where many practical measures remain that still need to be worked out or implemented — needs to be pursued further. In the area of education we are concerned about the increasing segregation of students according to their ethnic origin.

It is due to the progress that has been made that we can thus envision the gradual dismantling of the international trusteeship, along with a concomitant transfer of authority to the Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina. That process should be undertaken within the next year.

France and the European Union, for their part, will continue to stand side-by-side with Bosnia and Herzegovina. Although a High Representative may no longer be needed, the Special Representative of the European Union will continue to play the essential role of providing support and advice to the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina and ensuring coordination among the various forms of the European presence there.

Mr. Idohou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to join the preceding speakers in thanking the High Representative, Lord Ashdown, for the informative briefing he has just presented to the Council on the developments in implementing the peace agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It would appear obvious that the normalization and national integration process in Bosnia and Herzegovina has maintained all of its momentum, even though the entity has been unable to achieve either of the two major objectives, which are the conclusion of a stabilization and association agreement with the European Union, and integration into the Peace Partnership Programme of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

In particular, we should congratulate the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities on their remarkable achievements in reforming the defence sector and in strengthening economic stability, with increased participation by the Bosnian authorities in businesses, and on the progress made in terms of unifying and rehabilitating the city of Mostar and the Brcko district, which has made such good progress that the High Representative is considering withdrawing from it. That remarkable progress is a tribute both to the Office of the High Representative and to the international community; it should be considered an achievement to consolidate. Such consolidation requires continued efforts on issues that have been addressed too slowly.

We agree with the High Representative's analysis regarding the causes of that slowness. We must resolutely tackle the inertia that continues to impede the progress expected in critical sectors such as the judicial apparatus; the restructuring of the police; the intelligence sector; economic reforms, particularly agricultural modernization and privatization; the delimitation and demarcation of Bosnia and Herzegovina's borders with its neighbours; and the creation of agencies and institutions that are essential for its association with the European Union. Moreover, we are concerned at the instability resulting from the indictment of certain political figures whose actions have compromised the smooth operation of national institutions.

Concerning the issue of prosecuting war crimes, the Council must remain firm regarding the principle of apprehending fugitives still at large by finding them and transferring them to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. We must remind the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities of their obligation to ensure full and complete cooperation with the Tribunal, particularly with regard to Mladic and Karadzic.

Bosnia and Herzegovina must accelerate its progress in all those areas so that it can attain its major objectives. The High Representative must increase the pressure on all the relevant structures to obtain concrete results.

We are pleased at the European Union military mission's substantial support for the activities of the High Representative and its contribution to the continuing efforts to stabilize Bosnia and Herzegovina. We welcome its operations in priority strategic areas, which are proving to be particularly beneficial, as witnessed by the good reputation that the military mission has earned on the ground in such a short period of time.

In conclusion, we pay tribute to all actors in the international community who are working together to implement the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina and to consolidate the rule of law in that country.

Mr. D'Alotto (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Permit me to join previous speakers in thanking Lord Paddy Ashdown, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the comprehensive report (S/2005/706, annex) that he has just presented to us regarding developments in the situation in that country. Given that it was his last report to the Council, we should like to highlight Lord Ashdown's commitment and dedication in carrying out his duties since he assumed his mandate in May 2002 and to thank him for his efforts to move the peacebuilding process forward in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

With regard to the information received, my delegation appreciates the efforts made to ensure that Bosnia and Herzegovina embarks on the path of full Euro-Atlantic integration. In fact, as the report indicates, the authorities have made progress in meeting the requirements for the commencement of negotiations with the European Union and with NATO. Those actions, nearly 10 years after the implementation of the Dayton-Paris accords began, demonstrate the authorities' resolve to ensure the effective implementation of the commitments undertaken in those agreements.

Despite all that progress, however, we must once again express the hope that full cooperation develops with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, particularly with regard to bringing Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic before the Tribunal and the need to implement legislation in keeping with the principles of community institutions in specific areas, such as police reform.

In that connection, we have confidence in the authorities' commitment to resolve outstanding issues so that the transition can finally be made from the country's "Dayton era" to its "Brussels era". We also wish to highlight the efforts of the European Union-led multinational stabilization force and its central role in supporting the key objectives of the development process. There is no question that, should the Council consider the matter, we are prepared to renew the authorization for the mission. Moreover, my delegation agrees with Lord Ashdown's proposal to replace some international arrangements established in the context of Dayton with other arrangements that better reflect the progress made in the past 10 years, which will enable Bosnia and Herzegovina to fully develop its potential.

Argentina urges full compliance with the Dayton Agreements and the effective implementation of the relevant commitments, particularly cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia as one of the means of strengthening justice and the rule of law in societies that, like Bosnia and Herzegovina, have experienced conflict situations. We appeal to the authorities to support the Tribunal's work and to contribute to its efforts to ensure that accused persons who have not yet been brought to justice appear before the Tribunal. As my delegation has indicated on previous occasions, it is only through concerted action to combat impunity for grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that we can promote the development of judicial institutions and the reconciliation necessary to achieve a sustainable society.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): We thank the High Representative, Lord Ashdown, for his latest report on the implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina (S/2005/706, annex), pursuant to Security Council resolution 1031 (1995), as well as for his briefing to us this morning.

Greece fully associates itself with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Great Britain on behalf of the European Union.

Since the last time — back in March — that we had the opportunity to discuss Bosnia and Herzegovina and to listen to Lord Ashdown's report on the situation, much in the picture has changed, and mostly for the better. As the tenth anniversary of Dayton draws nearer, Bosnia and Herzegovina appropriately finds itself closer than ever to the new era that will see the country finally become part of the Euro-Atlantic family.

It is a happy coincidence that our meeting here today comes only a week after the most recent meeting of the European Union (EU) General Affairs and External Relations Council, at which the EU Council expressed its agreement with the European Commission's communication on the opening of negotiations for a stabilization and association agreement with Bosnia and Herzegovina. We

understand that the relevant European bodies are already working on a draft agreement, and we hope that the process will be completed in time for a decision at the next EU Council meeting.

For Bosnia and Herzegovina, the commencement of the negotiations on a stabilization and association agreement comes as the pinnacle of arduous efforts undertaken after successfully tackling a long list of obstacles. Its significance cannot be stressed enough; it amounts to a regeneration of the country on the basis of new foundations. However, even as recently as last June — as Lord Ashdown amply demonstrated in his report — today's outcome was far from being guaranteed.

We warmly welcome the recent developments that cleared the way for the opening of the stabilization and association agreement process, specifically the following ones.

First, we welcome the adoption of the public broadcasting system law, which sets up one broadcasting system with three multi-ethnic services, broadcasting in all three languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We are also satisfied at the progress made on police reform, with the adoption by the Republika Srpska National Assembly of an agreement which meets all relevant European Commission conditions. The agreement creates the basis for an efficient and modern police force for all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

From the positive assessments presented in other areas in the High Representative's report, we must single out the progress noted in the unification of Mostar and Brcko. That progress represents a symbol of hope and encouragement for all those who have argued and fought for the dream of peacefully coexisting multi-ethnic societies.

Another noteworthy development is the completion of defence reform, with the recent adoption of the Bosnia and Herzegovina defence reform legislation. Within the framework of Bosnia and Herzegovina's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, defence reform will give the country the armed forces required for it to face the security challenges of our fast-changing world environment. With the implementation of the defence reform, Bosnia and Herzegovina has come very close to its second goal: participation in the Partnership for Peace programme.

But, as we all know, there still is one outstanding question which risks undermining all other efforts — that of full compliance with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). Yet we cannot but recognize that, in this area too, the year 2005 has seen significant changes. In the first half of the year, no less than 15 indictees from Bosnia and Herzegovina were transferred to The Hague Tribunal. Still, full cooperation with ICTY means just that — full cooperation. The fact that the protagonists of the war, Mladic and Karadzic, are still at large poses an undeniable obstacle to the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina. It would be a pity if a whole country were allowed to remain hostage to the present situation.

We had hoped that the tenth anniversary of the Dayton accords would give Bosnia and Herzegovina the necessary impetus to soon become a member of the Partnership for Peace, with a launched stabilization and association agreement. There is still some time for that vision to come true. We continue to hope that this opportunity will not be missed. The people of Bosnia and Herzegovina deserve the better future that these prospects for a new era would bring them.

Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura (Brazil): I should like to join previous speakers in thanking High Representative Lord Ashdown for his thorough briefing on Bosnia and Herzegovina. We also thank him and the staff of his Office for the tireless efforts they have been making since 2002. Finally, we wish him and his team all the best in their future endeavours.

The presence and work of the United Nations has been instrumental in the reconstruction of the country's shattered infrastructure, the institutional reform process and the building of a multi-ethnic society. Structural, administrative and legislative reforms have been undertaken at a steady pace. Ownership is already being transferred gradually to the national authorities. The Bonn Powers tend to be employed with increased restraint. We have now reached a stage in which the phasing out of direct international administrative control is recommended as a requirement for the success of the next new phase towards a more solid unification and the fulfilment of Bosnia and Herzegovina's European aspirations.

International partners should be prepared from now on to play a role that is increasingly advisory and cooperative. In that regard, we are pleased with the news coming from Brussels. We expect the European Union to agree formally next week to open negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina on a stabilization and association agreement.

As we approach the tenth anniversary of the 1995 Dayton Peace Agreement, which marked the end of the brutal 1992-1995 war, there are suggestions that the complex structure should be modernized, leading to the creation of a single presidency and a State with unified and more functional institutions that would better represent the country and help achieve the final step towards true integration among the Serb, Croat and Muslim communities.

We are encouraged by the fact that negotiations for the surrender of former Bosnian Serb General Mladic as well as others suspected of serious violations of international law were reported to be under way. Although cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) has substantially improved, with the transfer of 12 indictees in 2005, the persistent failure to bring Mladic, Karadzic and other indictees to face trial before the ICTY is still our primary source of concern and continues to hinder efforts towards European integration.

The discovery in Snagovo last week of yet another mass grave of 1995 Srebrenica massacre victims is further proof of the seriousness of the crimes committed and of the need to see that justice is done. We welcome the fact that only five of those indicted for crimes committed in Bosnia and Herzegovina remain at large.

Regarding the efforts under way to bring Bosnia and Herzegovina's institutional structure up to European standards, we note with concern the reluctance of Republika Srpska to accept the fundamental European Commission principles for police sector reform, related budgetary authority free of all political influence, and the determination of technical criteria for policing districts. An urgent change of attitude on the part of its authorities is needed. We heard today that they are undertaking positive steps on those issues.

Modernization and economic reform remain essential in the effort to achieve a market economy that will spur development and job creation. More must be done on this issue since stability depends not only on the political panorama but also on the health of economic indicators.

Many problems remain to be tackled, but, with the support of the international community, and in particular with the help of the European Union, those challenges will be overcome.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of the Russian Federation.

We would like to express our gratitude to the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Lord Ashdown, for the report he submitted to the Security Council and for his comprehensive briefing, which has given us a clear picture of developments in the settlement process in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in the current phase of implementation of the Peace Agreement.

We commend the efforts of the High Representative in advancing the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During the almost four years of his tenure in the post, a number of reforms have been initiative aimed at increasing the effectiveness of the central institutions of the country, and a great deal of work has been done in particular in initiating military and tax reforms. It is critically important that, in the end, a compromise be reached with respect to a reorganization of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Moreover, in fleshing out and further advancing this very delicate reform, we must fully take into account the interests of all the Bosnian parties. In the near future, we will need also to resolve a number of other issues that are key to the future of Bosnia and Herzegovina, first and foremost the Constitution, which is a pivotal element of the Dayton Agreement. An important role must be played in that respect by the Bosnians themselves in developing mutually acceptable compromises. The sensitivity of this issue and the far-reaching consequences of constitutional reform require that every step be carefully weighed so as to prevent any destabilization of the still-fragile inter-ethnic relations in the country. The involvement of members of the international community in this process must take place within the strict parameters of the Steering Board of the Peace Implementation Council. In that regard, it is important to maintain the

principle of consensus within the international community, as authoritarian decisions in that area would do little to promote progress.

We endorse the key provisions that continue to be the foundations of the peace process in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Just as timely today are the major challenges enshrined in the very philosophy of the Dayton Agreement, namely, strengthening the climate of trust and constructive cooperation among the peoples of Bosnia and the importance of achieving consensus among all Bosnian parties with regard to building a stable State in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In that context, we must continue to focus our attention on issues pertaining to the genuine equality of peoples throughout the entire country, the problems of local self-government and the return of refugees and internally displaced persons.

We were pleased to note the progress made in strengthening Bosnian institutions, as set out by Lord Ashdown in his report. In that regard, we believe it is critically important that the High Representative continue to act in a spirit of partnership with Bosnian parties, focusing efforts on the adoption of independent consensual decisions. We must do our utmost to put in place political and diplomatic mechanisms while working with the Bosnian parties, including in the area of their cooperation with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

As we approach the tenth anniversary of the Peace Agreement, and given the upcoming elections in 2006 and the conversion of the Office of the High Representative into a mission of the European Union, we call for prompt transfer to Bosnian parties of responsibility for the fate of their country. We urge Bosnian parties to carry out constructive dialogue and to adopt decisions on the basis of consensus.

Russia intends to continue to play an active and constructive role in the international facilitation of the Bosnian settlement process within the mechanisms established for that purpose, in particular within the Peace Implementation Council in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its Steering Board, as well as within the Contact Group and in close contact with the High Representative.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I call on the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Prica (Bosnia and Herzegovina): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I have no doubt whatever that, thanks to your experience, outstanding qualities and competence, the Council's work will continue to be successful. I should also like to thank Lord Paddy Ashdown, High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina, for his comprehensive and eloquent report on the situation in my country.

In less than a week we are going to mark the tenth anniversary of the Dayton Peace Agreement. That will be a perfect opportunity to step back and re-evaluate the progress we have made and the goals we have achieved during the last decade. Indeed, they are tremendous. Frankly speaking, even at the fifth anniversary, while discussing the progress we had made, there were not many optimists ready to predict that, just five years later, Bosnia and Herzegovina would be ready to begin negotiations with the European Union on a stabilization and association agreement.

The report of the High Representative covers the period from 1 January to 1 July 2005. Therefore, as Lord Ashdown has rightly pointed out, it does not include the most recent development of significant importance that has occurred in the last four and a half months. I am pleased to say that Bosnia and Herzegovina now has succeeded in fulfilling all the conditions required by the European Commission's Feasibility Study. We therefore expect to start negotiations with the European Union on a stabilization and association agreement early next month. We consider that particular moment to be the most important in our post-Dayton history.

Beginning negotiations with the European Union on a stabilization and association agreement will mark another very important change for Bosnia and Herzegovina, namely, our institutions will have to start taking full responsibility for the future of the country, while the role of the Office of the High Representative will gradually change. With further progress on the ground, we hope that after 2006 the item entitled "The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina" will no longer be on the Council's agenda.

It is not my intention to go into the details set out in the report of the High Representative. Nevertheless, I would like to take this opportunity to mention some of the most remarkable achievements during recent months.

The defence reform has virtually been completed, with great efforts having been made by our experts from the Ministry for Defence and representatives of the international community.

Agreement has been reached on one of the most sensitive issues, that of police reform. Cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) by the authorities of Republika Srpska has become concrete and fruitful, even though there is more to be done. We have great hope that the last seven indictees will be brought to justice by the end of this year, which will enable the ICTY exit strategy to become effective.

Judiciary reform is under way in order to strengthen the rule of law and to build the capacity of courts to take on the most difficult cases, especially those relating to organized crime and corruption.

Economic reforms are also well under way. We will launch the value added tax from January 2006. We expect that measure to have a significant impact on eliminating the grey economy and on increasing the budget.

The privatization process must be accelerated as the main generator for overcoming the legacy of the State-controlled economy. Completing privatization and engaging young, educated and skilled professionals capable of improving management is the only long-term solution for economic transition and recovery. On the positive side, it is important to underline that the country has a very low inflation rate, a stable currency, rising foreign currency reserves and a very favourable foreign debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio. Even the high trade deficit, which continues to be a long-term threat, is still being offset by remittances from abroad. Moreover, there are some signs that exports during this year rose more robustly than imports. In the last five years, our country has enjoyed significant GDP growth, one of the highest in the region.

Furthermore, it is very important to mention that regional cooperation in the Balkans continues to strengthen, with particular emphasis on our good relations with neighbouring countries. Our prospects with the European Union are boosting confidence in peace and prosperity throughout the region. Bosnia and Herzegovina stands ready to support the development of good relations between neighbouring and other countries in the region on the basis of sovereignty, mutual respect and non-interference in internal affairs, thereby contributing to the overall stability of the region.

Finally, on the eve of the tenth anniversary of the Dayton/Paris Peace Accords, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the entire international community for the enormous support and assistance provided to us during the last decade. It is obvious that without its help and decisive action no significant progress would have been possible.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Italy. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): I wish to associate myself and my country with the statement made by the United Kingdom on behalf of the European Union, specifically with the indications it provides regarding key points pertaining to the draft presidential statement.

I also wish to express Italy's warm appreciation of the role performed by High Representative Lord Ashdown in a crucial and very sensitive phase in the history of both Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Balkans. I would add that that is a role he has performed with great ability and resolve in a context and in circumstances that are absolutely extraordinary.

With the approach of the 10-year anniversary of the Dayton agreements, the international community — the Peace Implementation Council, the Quint group of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States, the Contact Group and the European Union — has long been considering the opportunity of cutting back its commitment in Bosnia and Herzegovina and assigning greater responsibility to the local political forces in order to overcome the institutional anomaly of a State that is formally sovereign but substantially conditioned, in many respects, by a framework of strong international supervision.

In the judgement of the international community, the current phase has now reached completion. The possibility of undertaking a reform of the Dayton setting is facilitated by recent progress achieved on the

issue of reforming the police and the military — progress that has paved the way to the upcoming start of the stabilization and association negotiation with the European Union. That new context now makes it possible to give new impetus to the process of reforming the Office of the High Representative. Italy therefore believes that the time has come to discuss and assess a significant reduction in the High Representative's powers with an eye to giving greater responsibility to the institutions and political forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thereby making effective the concept of empowerment and tangible the message that the international community intends to convey — namely, that the institutions and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina hold in their own hands the prospects for a concrete approach to and integration into the European Union.

In parallel to that process, we need to redefine the international presence in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which should be based on the need to assist institutional capacity-building rather than substitute-manage a country where the local institutions appear to be weak.

The 10-year anniversary of the Dayton agreements should mark a watershed in that sense and provide an opportunity to overcome the strong distortions present in the local administrative system, which is dangerously overreliant on external intervention in the management of questions of internal policy.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I now give the floor to Lord Ashdown to respond to the comments made and questions raised.

Lord Ashdown: Before I came to this job, I was a member of the British Parliament, and when I was first elected I was given one piece of advice by my rather elderly and distinguished predecessor, who said to me: "My boy, I give you one piece of advice — never stand long between an audience and its meal." I am rather conscious that I am standing between members and their meals, and that is a dangerous position to be in.

I would like, if I may, to start off by thanking very warmly all those who used such generous words in their contributions. I am most grateful to them. It has been a privilege indeed to serve this Council, the international community at large and, indeed, the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am grateful also for the general support which has been expressed around the Council, and, if I may say so, especially for the commitment made by so many nations to continue to keep their engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. It will be needed.

As the representative of France rightly pointed out, my colleague the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina and I may be giving an optimistic report, but it may also be true that the worst of this journey — the journey from blood and conflict — is behind us. Nevertheless, the representative of France is correct — Bosnia and Herzegovina has a long, long way to go in completing its journey to full, sovereign, democratic statehood as a member of the European Union. It will need the Council's engagement, commitment and constant attention. I am confident that that journey will be completed, but it is far too early for the international community to say that the job is done and we can leave.

However — and here, I think, is the important point — increasingly, as has been reflected in comments around the table, the new framework for the second phase of that journey to transition will be the framework of the European Union. That is not to say that we abandon Dayton; we certainly do not. It is the foundations of our peace and we cannot abandon it, except, as you rightly said yourself, Sir, by consensus agreement between the three peoples. That is the only way to do it. It cannot be imposed, but the European Union is now increasingly the scaffolding within which Bosnia and Herzegovina will make the second phase of its journey.

However — and again, I would like to agree with a point made by you, Sir — it is very important that the wider international, non-European Union coalition that has been so significant in bringing Bosnia and Herzegovina so far remain in place. The European Union may provide the scaffolding, but it is very important that the Peace Implementation Council continue to play its crucial role as the wheelhouse that steers the international engagement in Bosnia and Herzegovina, because it is only through the Peace Implementation Council that non-European Union nations that have contributed so much can continue to play their part.

An essential part of that — and again, this was picked up in a number of contributions today — is the progressive handover to Bosnia and Herzegovina's politicians. Let me reassure the Council that we long ago abandoned what was referred to as the

"commanding approach". As the representative of Denmark quite rightly identified, there has been a gradual and persistent transfer, certainly over the last three years, to Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities. Refugee return, arguably the biggest and most difficult and sensitive issue we deal with, was long ago handed over to the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities. None of the key commanding reforms that were referred to by my colleague the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina — defence reform, the Indirect Tax Authority reform, value added tax reform, judicial reform, police reform — were done by the commanding approach. All of them were done by agreement between the parliaments. None of them has been imposed.

Indeed, in terms of the use of the Bonn Powers, as the representative of Brazil rightly said, we have been using those decreasingly over the last three and a half years and will continue to do so. In my first year, I used the Bonn Powers 70 times to impose laws — 36 fewer than my predecessor. In my second year, I used them 30 times; last year, three times; this year, once; next year, I hope, none. Members will see that there has been a very significant decline in the use of the Bonn Powers, and that must continue, as the representative of Italy has just said. It is very important that we continue to progress towards a progressive handover of the authority and power of the High Representative in a sensible, timely and considered fashion to the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities.

Let me remind Council members that the Office of the High Representative has, in the last three years, halved its size and halved its budget. That is an example of how we are now progressively moving what we do in the Office of the High Representative over to the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities. That must continue.

I wish to make three final points, if I may. I agree so much with the representative of Romania, who said that the regional aspect here is critical. If I have a criticism of the international community's approach to the Western Balkans, it is that we have a series of policies for individual countries there, but we do not have a regional policy. Almost no issue that I or my colleagues in Bosnia and Herzegovina deal with in that country today is not more easily dealt with on a regional basis than it is within the borders of the individual countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Albania, Kosovo, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and so on. The regional element is crucial to our future success.

As to my next point, if I may, the representative of Algeria mentioned the fact that economic improvement is occurring, but has not yet touched ordinary peoples' lives. That is correct. Bosnia and Herzegovina now has the fastest growing economy in the Western Balkans — from a very low base — but it is not yet growing fast enough either to be sustainable or to touch on people's lives. We have to continue to push that forward — a key task for my successor.

Finally, if I may, the representative of the United States mentioned the importance of constitutional reform. Again, I entirely agree that increasing the functional efficiency of the Bosnia and Herzegovina State is now crucial. It seems to me that there are two important points to be made. The first is that this is a process, not an event. It will take time. I am glad to see that, because of the engagement of the United States and the European Union, that process has begun in the past couple of weeks and will continue next week in Washington, D.C. The fact that progress has not been large does not matter. The process is under way, and that is extremely important. I anticipate that major progress on that front will not occur until after the October 2006 elections. But the fact that we have laid the groundwork and started the process is entirely beneficial. Secondly — and this point was made by you, Mr. President — this can be done only by the local domestic authorities. The international community can have a role to facilitate, to assist and to enable. But in the end, the only way to achieve the new status, the new structures for Bosnia and Herzegovina, is by consensus — by agreement between the peoples of Bosnia and Herzegovina. I am sure that they will do it, but it is going to take patience.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Lord Ashdown for his comments.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I would like once again to take this opportunity to thank Lord Ashdown for his efforts towards the consolidation of peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to wish him well in his future endeavours.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5307

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5307th meeting

Monday, 21 November 2005, 3.25 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. D'Alotto
	Benin	Mr. Idohou
	Brazil	Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mrs. Papadopoulou
	Japan	Mr. Haneda
	Philippines	Mr. Mercado
	Romania	Mr. Dumitru
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mrs. Taj
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 2 November 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2005/698)

Letter dated 7 November 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2005/706)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-61305 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Letter dated 2 November 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2005/698)

Letter dated 7 November 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2005/706)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Germany and Italy, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Prica (Bosnia and Herzegovina) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. Pleuger (Germany) and Mr. Spatafora (Italy) took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2005/727, which contains the text of a draft resolution. I should like to draw attention to minor changes to the twentieth preambular paragraph. With those changes, the paragraph reads as follows:

"Further welcoming tangible signs of Bosnia and Herzegovina's progress towards the European Union, and, in particular, the decision by the EU to open negotiations with Bosnia and Herzegovina on a Stabilization and Association Agreement, and calling on the authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina to implement in full their undertakings, including on police reform, as part of that process".

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2005/698, which contains a letter dated 2 November 2005 from the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the activities of the European Union military mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Members of the Council also have before them document S/2005/706, which contains a letter dated 7 November 2005 from the Secretary-General transmitting the twenty-eighth report of the High Representative for the Implementation of the Peace Agreement on Bosnia and Herzegovina.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution, as orally revised. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Greece, Japan, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution, as orally revised, has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1639 (2005).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council will remain seized of the matter.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5308

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5308th meeting

Wednesday, 23 November 2005, at noon

New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin	Mr. Idohou
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mrs. Taj
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-61577 (E)

The meeting was called to order at noon.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2005/723, containing the text of a letter dated 16 November 2005 from the representative of Japan addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Members also have before them document S/2005/732, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Greece, Japan, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1640 (2005).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5309

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5309th meeting

Wednesday, 23 November 2005, 12.05 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin	Mr. Idohou
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De Rivière
	Greece	Mrs. Papadopoulou
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Johnston
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mrs. Taj
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

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05-61584 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 12.05 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Afghanistan

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council congratulates the people of Afghanistan on the confirmation of the final results of the parliamentary and provincial council elections. The successful holding of these elections has demonstrated the broad commitment of Afghan voters to democracy and freedom in their country, and the Council welcomes that the completion of the confirmation process has paved the way toward the timely inauguration of the new parliament and thus to the conclusion of the Bonn political process.

"The Security Council commends all Afghans for having taken this step and calls on them, and, in particular, the representatives-elect and other former candidates, to remain fully committed to peace, the constitution, the rule of law and democracy in Afghanistan.

"The Security Council, in this connection, reiterates its appreciation to all those who contributed to the electoral process, and extends special appreciation to the Joint Electoral Management Body and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan for their dedication. The Security Council also reiterates its endorsement of the efforts of the Afghan Security Forces, with the support of the International Security Assistance Force and the Operation Enduring Freedom coalition, within their respective responsibilities, to improve the safety and stability of the country.

"The Security Council hopes for the prompt appointment of all members of the House of Elders (*Meshrano Jirga*).

"The Security Council reaffirms the importance for the international community to maintain a high level of commitment to assisting Afghanistan in addressing its remaining challenges, in particular in the fields of security, including fighting terrorist and narcotics threats, governance and development.

"The Security Council supports the central and impartial role the United Nations continues to play for the consolidation of peace and stability in Afghanistan and coordination of the relevant international efforts and welcomes consultations initiated by the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations on the post-Bonn process.

"Finally, the Security Council stresses that violence in any form intended to disrupt the democratic process in Afghanistan will not be tolerated. The Council unequivocally condemns all recent attacks in Afghanistan, including the attacks against the International Security Assistance Force, and expresses its deepest sympathies to the victims, both Afghan and international, and their families, as well as to the troop-contributors of ISAF."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2005/56.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.10 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5310

Security Council

Distr.: General
28 November 2005

Original: English

Official communiqué of the 5310th (closed) meeting of the Security Council

Held in private at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 28 November 2005, at 11.10 a.m.

In accordance with rule 55 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Security Council, the following communiqué was issued through the Secretary-General in place of a verbatim record:

On 28 November 2005, the Security Council, pursuant to annex II, sections A and B of resolution 1353 (2001), held its 5310th meeting in private with the troop-contributing countries to the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB).

The Security Council and the troop-contributing countries heard briefings under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure by Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi, and Major-General Derrick Mbuyiselo Mgwebi, Force Commander of the United Nations Operation in Burundi.

Members of the Council, Ms. McAskie, Major-General Mgwebi and representatives of participating troop-contributing countries had a constructive exchange of views.

05-62136 (E) 291105

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5311th meeting

Wednesday, 30 November 2005, 10.10 a.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Argentina	Mr. D'Alotto
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	Brazil	Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura
	China	Mr. Li Junhua
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Mercado
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. McKenzie Smith
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

The situation in Burundi

Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Burundi (S/2005/728)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-62202 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Burundi

Fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Burundi (S/2005/728)

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Burundi, in which she requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to Her Excellency Mrs. Antoinette Batumubwira, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Burundi.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Batumubwira (Burundi) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the fifth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Operation in Burundi, document S/2005/728. Members of the Council also have before them document S/2005/741, which contains the text of a draft resolution prepared in the course of the Council's prior consultations.

I wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2005/736, containing the text of a letter dated 23 November 2005 from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Burundi addressed to the President of the Security Council.

I now invite Her Excellency Mrs. Batumubwira, Foreign Minister of Burundi, to make a statement.

Mrs. Batumubwira (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): It is an honour and a true pleasure for me to have the opportunity to address the Security Council soon after the Council mission's fruitful visit to Burundi on 8 and 9 November 2005.

First, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Burundi, on behalf of my delegation and on my own account, I wish to extend my most sincere thanks to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for the commitment and courage he has always demonstrated as he carries out his noble task. I would also like to thank him for his commitment to the cause of peace and security throughout the world, and more specifically, in my country, Burundi. I would moreover like to thank the Security Council for the resolute determination it has demonstrated in its support for the people of Burundi in their quest for peace. With the adoption of resolution 1545 (2004) authorizing the deployment of ONUB, the United Nations made its contribution to the process of peace and national reconciliation in Burundi.

As of 1 June 2004, on the basis of the mandate explicitly set forth in paragraphs 5 to 7 of that resolution, the ONUB peacekeeping operation was deployed. From that point on, up until the elections in Burundi, ONUB provided resolute support to the electoral and democratic process.

Once again, I would take this opportunity to convey the gratitude of the Government of Burundi to Ms. Carolyn McAskie, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi, for her commitment to ensuring the success of ONUB's mission.

Almost exactly three months ago, following 10 years of political crisis, Burundi welcomed a democratically elected President. That was the last phase of a lengthy process that led, through negotiations, transitions and, finally, elections, to the establishment of elected political institutions at all levels — institutions whose major challenge is now to ensure the country's reconstruction, with a view to achieving sustainable development.

Developments in Burundi over the past two years have often been cited as exemplary. This outcome is the result of joint efforts by the international community, the African Union, the Regional Initiative and, above all, the people of Burundi themselves, who have demonstrated great political maturity in choosing peace and democracy.

Strengthened by its achievements, Burundi, through its Government, is working to address the challenges of reconstruction and development, which is the only way of ensuring sustainable peace.

Allow me to describe various aspects of the current situation in Burundi.

With respect to security, there is peace throughout most of the territory, apart from a few pockets in the areas of rural Bujumbura, Cibitoke and Bubanza, where the crime rate remains high. Sometimes banditry is the problem, and sometimes atrocities are perpetrated, such as the mutilations and decapitations carried out by members of the Front National de Libération (FNL). As Council members are aware, the FNL has refused to engage in talks to join all of the other people of Burundi on the path to reconstruction and development.

All of the security forces — the national police and the National Defence Force — are working hard to put an end to such actions, which could destabilize our hard-won peace. Fortunately, there are visible and encouraging results. In November, 707 members of the FNL-Palipehutu left the movement and surrendered to the authorities. Many of them have rejoined their families.

Throughout the national territory, the security situation is now under control. However, there is still some concern as to the presence of numerous armed groups, including the FNL-Palipehutu, in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We would draw the Council's attention to this situation, which directly threatens our efforts to consolidate peace in Burundi. In that respect, we would recall the relevance of the letter dated 21 October 2005 addressed to the Security Council from the Tripartite Plus Commission calling for an extension of the mandate of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

On the economic front, the country is emerging from a lengthy crisis, during which its economy was stagnant. Domestically, however, a certain sense of confidence has re-emerged, and, in the last few months, there has been a significant increase in the tax yield, the result of greater strictness in the collection of customs duties and taxes.

Burundi is one of the countries that benefited from the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Debt Initiative; it reached the decision point last July. All efforts are being made to enable it to reach the completion point within one year. Debt cancellation would enable us to devote all of our financial resources to development. However, the country has an urgent need over the coming year for budgetary support so that we can overcome obstacles and reach the completion point by the end of the year.

As concerns reconstruction and development programmes, a document entitled "Priority programme for reconstruction and development, 2005-2008" is now being finalized. It is based on an earlier emergency programme and includes priority needs set out by the Government in the context of the combat against poverty. In the latter half of February 2006, the programme will be presented to a donor conference in Bujumbura.

However, I must stress the urgent need to financially strengthen multilateral agencies, including United Nations agencies, so that they can shift from humanitarian support to development support. In that respect, we welcome the establishment of Peacebuilding Commission, and we are certain that Burundi will benefit from the opportunities it makes available to countries in a post-conflict situation.

There have been very encouraging signs in terms of bilateral and multilateral cooperation. In November, we were visited by a United Kingdom delegation led by the Secretary of State for International Development; a mission from Belgium, led by the Minister for Development Cooperation and the Minister of Defence; a mission from the World Bank headed by the Vice-President for Africa; and, finally, two high-level expert missions from France and from Germany recently visited Burundi.

It is important to stress that such cooperation, now and in future, will be taking place within in a new operational framework headed by a national committee on the coordination of assistance.

In addition, the foundations for a system for the effective management of assistance and of public finances have been laid in the context of the Ministry on Good Governance and General Inspection of the State and Local Administration. In a first major undertaking, an anti-corruption bill has been adopted by the Council of Ministers and will be voted on by the Parliament before the end of 2006.

It is in that context that ONUB's new mandate in Burundi was analysed. There is no doubt that it is because of the remarkable work done by ONUB that all of the progress I have been describing has been possible. A joint analysis by the Government and ONUB led to a decision to recommend a gradual disengagement, in an orderly manner, beginning on 1 January 2006. Several areas of cooperation with ONUB have been identified as still being necessary.

On the basis of discussions between the two parties, and in the framework of what has been agreed, the Government would like the next mandate of ONUB to focus on the following aspects: First, monitoring the borders between Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, including Lake Tanganyika, and the cross-border movement of arms, in close cooperation with the Burundi security forces and ONUB; secondly, support for the completion of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and for the reform of the security sector that is under way, in a spirit of collaboration with all of the relevant partners.

Thirdly, support is required for the promotion of human rights by strengthening existing capacity in civil society and in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Burundi. In that connection, the Government welcomes the proposal agreed with ONUB to gradually replace international experts with national experts in the context of capacity-building.

Fourthly, support is required for transitional justice, with a view to establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a Special Chamber. Fifthly, there must be protection of ONUB personnel and equipment, with support from the Government.

Sixthly, demining is required, with emphasis on capacity-building in that area; and, lastly, there is a need for logistical and engineering support for humanitarian operations carried out by the World Food Programme and Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The people of Burundi, who voted overwhelmingly for peace, now await its dividends. The Government has the responsibility to do everything in its power to that legitimate aspiration. It is for that reason that we consider 2006 to be the year to mobilize all efforts — both at the national level and by our bilateral and multilateral partners — to rebuild Burundi and to resolutely dedicate ourselves to sustainable development. We count on the overall support of the United Nations in that undertaking, and of the Security Council in particular.

On behalf of the Government of Burundi, I wish to thank the Security Council in advance for the draft resolution it is about to adopt, for, like previous resolutions, it aims at supporting the determination of the people of Burundi to strengthen peace.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Greece, Japan, Philippines, Romania, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America

The President (*spoke in Russian*): There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1641 (2005).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 10.35 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5312

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5312th meeting

Wednesday, 30 November 2005, 10.45 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Argentina	Mr. D'Alotto
	Benin	Mr. Idohou
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Li Song
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Mr. Lacanilao
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-62208 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Russian*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Ibrahim Gambari, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Gambari: I returned last week from my first visit to the Middle East in my capacity as Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs. I accompanied the Secretary-General on his visit to Iraq, and then proceeded to Lebanon, Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory.

In this briefing, I will present the Secretariat's assessment of events on the ground since the previous briefing to the Council on 20 October and will share with members some impressions gained during my visit. In doing so, I will try not to go over the ground covered by the Secretary-General himself and by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations in their recent briefings to the Council.

Two weeks ago, the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority reached an Agreement on Movement and Access. The Agreement was made possible by months of very hard work by Quartet Special Envoy James Wolfensohn and his team and, at the end, by the personal engagement of the Secretary of State of the United States, Condoleezza Rice, and the European Union High Representative for Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana. The Agreement envisages an unprecedented third-party role for the European Union, an enhanced contribution by the United States Security Coordinator, support from the Quartet Special Envoy and the continued close involvement of the United Nations and the World Bank.

The first aspect of the Agreement was implemented last Saturday, when the Rafah crossing reopened under Palestinian control for travellers in both directions and for the outgoing passage of goods, with supervision by the European Union as a third party. On that day, 757 people entered Gaza at Rafah and 830 exited. The European Union's 90-man-strong Border Assistance Mission will be responsible for resolving any disputes between Israel and the Palestinian Authority arising from the Agreement.

Secondly, the parties agreed that the crossings between Gaza and Israel would operate continuously, unlike in the past. The aim is for 150 export trucks to be processed daily by the end of 2005 and for 400 to be processed daily by the end of next year. Goods will enter Gaza through Kerem Shalom, where Israel, Egypt and Gaza meet. The European Union will monitor customs arrangements, with its mission being reviewed in a year's time.

Thirdly, bus convoys between Gaza and the West Bank will start on 15 December, with truck convoys following on 15 January 2006. Fourthly, the Government of Israel has undertaken to review the system of movement restrictions in the West Bank and to reduce them to the maximum extent possible by the end of this year. Fifthly, the construction of the seaport is to begin immediately. Finally, the parties will continue discussions on the airport.

The Agreement addresses a number of the issues that were left hanging after Israel's withdrawal of settlements and military infrastructure from the Gaza Strip. The recent Agreement resolved those issues or set up frameworks for doing so. Everything now hinges on the full and timely implementation of the Agreement.

Meanwhile, representatives of the United States Government are working closely with the parties on implementation, and Mr. Wolfensohn's team will be tracking progress on behalf of the Quartet. They deserve our collective support and encouragement. The Quartet Special Envoy intends to issue reports every two weeks, so as to keep the international community informed of progress. His first report, issued yesterday, shows, among other things, that over 800 people are

passing through Rafah every day, even though the crossing is currently open for only four hours a day. Those numbers are expected to increase as Rafah moves towards 24-hour operation.

In this regard, the United Nations will be playing its part in tracking progress in the implementation of the Agreement, including with regard to the easing of movement restrictions in the West Bank. According to figures from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the number of obstacles to movement has increased in the past two months from 376 to 396. OCHA will be confirming that figure with the Israel Defense Forces, but it appears that much of the increase has been in the northern West Bank — the area where in August four Israeli settlements were removed and where movement had previously been eased.

Meanwhile, a picture is emerging of the West Bank divided into three distinct areas — north, central and south. While movement is relatively free inside those areas, travel between them — with the exception of Nablus — is severely hampered by a combination of checkpoints, travel permits and physical obstacles. As part of its ongoing work, which will now feed into implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access, the United Nations is compiling a comprehensive set of recommendations to reduce obstacles, improve movement and enhance Palestinian access to essential services and markets.

The full implementation of all aspects of the Agreement on Movement and Access is a vital step towards Palestinian economic recovery. Recovery will also require the strengthening of Palestinian institutions and economic management and the effective distribution of international aid. Those issues will be on the agenda of the mid-December meeting of the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee, which is the primary policy-making meeting of donors, the Palestinian Authority and the Government of Israel.

At the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee meeting, it is hoped that the Palestinian Authority will announce new aid coordination structures designed to enhance Palestinian control of the coordination of donor assistance and present a full outline of its medium-term development plan. Together, those initiatives should contribute to the process of Palestinian institutional development, as envisaged in the road map. It is hoped that that the Palestinian Authority will commit itself to tackling a number of outstanding issues in its own plan. The Palestinian Authority's fiscal situation is also of immediate concern, and urgent action will be required before the end of the year to address the anticipated fiscal crisis.

I would add that the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) held a successful conference of donors and host countries in Jordan this month to raise funds for continued support for Palestinian refugees in the region. Continued support for UNRWA programmes will be vital for stability and recovery in the occupied Palestinian territory in the post-disengagement period.

The fragile security situation and the need for more decisive action in accordance with the road map have been underlined by continued violence. Throughout the reporting period, the Israeli army targeted alleged militants in the West Bank and Gaza and undertook major arrest campaigns in the West Bank. On 26 October, a suicide bomber blew himself up at Hadera market in Israel, killing six Israeli civilians. The Secretary-General promptly condemned that act of terror. Violence took its toll on Palestinian civilians as well as on Israelis. During the reporting period, at least seven Palestinian civilians were killed, including, tragically, an 11-year-old boy carrying a toy gun, who was fatally shot by Israeli forces in Jenin on 3 November.

The Palestinian security services have taken some action, including arrests, against those who persist in carrying out terrorist attacks. Measures have also been taken to keep weapons off the streets and to assert the rule of law in areas under Palestinian control. More work needs, of course, to be done in that regard. There have also been efforts to rehabilitate former militia members by employing them in the security services. That, however, has given rise to serious fiscal concerns. Continued efforts are necessary to develop viable and effective strategies to deal with the militias.

President Abbas has established a leadership committee on security reform, which, in turn, has mandated a technical team to develop a white paper on safety and security for Palestinians. That process will involve public dialogue in an effort to build national consensus. Those efforts have the strong support of the United States Security Coordinator, Lieutenant General William Ward, whose successor, Lieutenant General Keith Dayton, will soon be on the ground. The United

States Security Coordinator has also been supporting efforts to improve Israeli-Palestinian security cooperation.

Let me turn to the issues of barrier construction and settlement activity. The road map calls for a freeze of all settlement activity, including the natural growth of settlements, and for settlement outposts constructed since March 2001 to be dismantled. On 24 November, the Israeli press reported that Housing Minister Yitzhak Herzog published tenders for an additional 350 housing units in the West Bank settlement of Ma'ale Adumim.

Israel has also continued construction all along the projected route of the barrier, including on occupied Palestinian territory in East Jerusalem and between Jerusalem and Ramallah. A new terminal was opened at the main entrance to Bethlehem, located some 500 to 600 metres further inside occupied Palestinian territory than the previous checkpoint and functioning much like an international border crossing. Israel officials have indicated that there will be a series of such crossings along the route of the barrier between East Jerusalem and the remainder of the West Bank. The Israel Defense Forces have also continued to issue military land requisition orders in various parts of the West Bank to acquire land for barrier construction.

As I witnessed during my visit to the region, the combination of settlement activity and barrier construction is creating new and significant facts on the ground in the West Bank. That is particularly the case in and around East Jerusalem, where the route of the barrier fragments and isolates Palestinian neighbourhoods. I reiterate the Secretary-General's call on Israel to abide by its legal obligations as set forth in the 9 July 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice and in General Assembly resolution ES-10/15.

Against that backdrop, we are entering a delicate electoral period, with further rounds of Palestinian municipal elections in December, Palestinian legislative elections scheduled for 25 January 2006 and Israeli elections scheduled for the end of March, following Prime Minister Sharon's request to the President of Israel to dissolve the Knesset.

Primary elections for the ruling Fatah party have already taken place in several locations, but after claims of fraud and the storming of a number of Gaza polling stations by militants two days ago, the primaries were suspended. Nevertheless, technical preparations by the Palestinian Central Election Commission are well under way to meet the unchanged target date of 25 January 2006 for the legislative elections. The United Nations will assist the Commission through a liaison and support unit to coordinate international observers, similar to the unit set up for last year's presidential election.

The main concerns of the Central Election Commission, whose President I met in Ramallah, are that the modalities of the poll in East Jerusalem be finalized as soon as possible, that the freedom of movement of candidates be assured by Israeli Authorities during the January campaigning period and that prisoners in Israeli jails be allowed to vote.

The Israeli authorities, while expressing their intention not to interfere with the poll, said that they would not cooperate in its conduct. Under the road map, the Palestinian Authority is committed to holding free, open and fair elections, and Israel must support the development of Palestinian democracy and facilitate elections, including in East Jerusalem.

Meanwhile, in Israel, the Labour Party has elected a new leader, Amir Peretz, who has informed Prime Minister Sharon that Labour will leave the coalition Government. New elections are expected by the end of March. Mr. Sharon has announced his intention to leave the Likud party and seek re-election as Prime Minister as head of the new Kadima — or Forward — Party. It is too early to say what the impact of those major political realignments will be on Israel's approach to the peace process, but this is no doubt an important time for the future of both Israel and the Palestinians.

Lebanon is also at a critical stage in its history and faces a number of important challenges. During my visit to Beirut, I told all Lebanese interlocutors of the commitment of the United Nations to continue working closely with the Government of Lebanon and to support Lebanon's independence, sovereignty, stability and security. I reiterated our belief that the challenges facing Lebanon should be met through a process led by the Lebanese people themselves and supported by the United Nations and the international community as necessary.

In my discussions on the work of the investigation into the assassination of former Prime Minister Hariri, I underlined that resolution 1636 (2005), adopted recently by the Security Council, made

clear Syria's obligation to extend its full support and cooperation to the United Nations International Independent Investigation Commission. I reiterated that the modalities of such cooperation should be agreed in a bilateral fashion between the Syrian authorities and the Commission. As reported last Friday, the Commission and the Syrian authorities have reached an agreement to conduct the interviews of the Syrian individuals concerned in Vienna.

My visit confirmed my earlier assessment that Lebanon remains committed to moving ahead with a challenging and important programme of political and socio-economic reform. Prime Minister Siniora's Government has been working to formulate a financial and economic plan that will be the subject of the next meeting of the Core Group of countries, which have offered their support for Lebanon's various reform initiatives.

The critical importance of the Government of Lebanon extending its full control over all its territory was underlined on 21 November, when Hizbullah initiated heavy attacks in Ghajar village and the Shab'a farms area from the Lebanese side of the Blue Line. The exchange of fire subsequently extended all along the Blue Line. Mr. Guéhenno briefed the Council on those attacks last week, and the Council has spoken very clearly on them.

Consistent with its mandate, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, played an important role in bringing about a ceasefire and securing the handover of the bodies of the three Hizbullah fighters killed, while Special Coordinator De Soto and Mr. Pedersen, Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for Lebanon, remained in close touch with Israeli and Lebanese interlocutors respectively.

I must also report that Israel violated Lebanese airspace along coastal areas on many occasions during the reporting period, including before the Hizbullah attacks. There were also two large sonic booms over civilian areas. And after the attacks, leaflets were dropped over Beirut. Since 21 November, 12 air violations by Israel have been recorded. Israel claims its actions were necessary in the face of evidence of possible hostile acts by Hizbullah, while the Government of Lebanon claims that the violations serve to provoke attacks. Their cessation, which the United Nations has repeatedly called for, would contribute to the maintenance of calm along the Blue Line. Nonetheless, it is the policy of the United Nations — and we will continue to assert before both parties, in the strongest terms — that one violation cannot justify another. It is thus imperative to reduce tensions and achieve security on both sides of the Blue Line.

To conclude, I returned from the region hopeful about the future but with a renewed appreciation of the immense challenges the region faces. I returned an optimist, but without illusions.

I have seen many things that make me optimistic: the Rafah crossing, where Palestinians have assumed control of part of their border for the first time in their history; the Gaza settlements that Israel evacuated and destroyed, setting a vital precedent for the future; the resolve of Palestinian officials to proceed with elections and economic and security sector reforms; and the awareness of Israeli officials that they must consider the impact of their actions on the very Palestinian partner with whom they must try to make peace. And in Beirut, I witnessed the determination of the Government of Lebanon to assert its control over the entire country, which is vital if regional peace is to be secured.

On the other hand, I have also discussed with interlocutors, or seen with my own eyes, a number of very real challenges to progress: the extent to which the barrier, checkpoints and Israeli settlements dominate the landscape in the West Bank; the dire economic and social situation of many people in Gaza and the West Bank; the weakness of the rule of the law in the areas under Palestinian control; the genuine insecurity and fear that Israelis face on a daily basis; and the border between Israel and Lebanon — always tense, recently volatile — where the Government of Lebanon has yet to assert its full sovereignty and control. I have also seen, with great admiration, the determination of the United Nations system on the ground to help improve the situation and to do so in a better coordinated manner.

Above all, I return from the region with the strong belief that the only way forward for Israelis and Palestinians alike is, on the one hand, for the parties to ensure the success of disengagement by fully implementing the recent Agreement on Movement and Access; and, on the other, for both parties to take

renewed action, in parallel, to fulfil their obligations under phase one of the road map.

The Palestinian Authority must implement proper restructuring of its security services and must take action against individuals involved in violence. Israel must act with restraint. It is in its own interest to support the Palestinian Authority's efforts to establish calm during the coming weeks and months. In addition, Palestinians need an Authority that manages budgetary resources carefully and that plans effectively for a future Palestinian State. I look forward with great interest to reports on Palestinian institutional strengthening and economic development, which will be delivered to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee in two weeks' time.

The Government of Israel has yet to fulfil its road map obligations to cease settlement activity and to dismantle settlement outposts constructed since March 2001. Israel's continued creation of facts on the ground damages the Palestinian leaders who are seeking to be elected on a platform of peaceful negotiations with Israel. It also complicates efforts to achieve a viable two-State solution with contiguity of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and with meaningful linkages between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Finally, the coming electoral period calls for the utmost wisdom and political determination on both sides and should be turned into an opportunity for forward movement, not stagnation. The Palestinian elections can serve as a platform for the necessary transition from a heavily and disparately armed society to a society built on the rule of law in which the Palestinian Authority holds a monopoly on instruments of violence. We hope that all will support the Palestinians' right to decide on their conduct — including participation — and that Israel will cooperate so that the playing field is level.

If the Palestinian elections are successfully conducted and once Israelis have determined at the ballot box which political direction they wish their leaders to take, we may yet see the emergence of new circumstances in which to press forward, quickly and decisively, with the implementation of all phases of the road map towards the goal of a just and lasting peace based on two States, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace and within secure and recognized borders, in accordance with Security Council resolutions. The United Nations will, of course, continue to work towards the goal of a comprehensive and just peace in the region. I believe strongly that that goal is both imperative and achievable.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Mr. Gambari for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

United Nations S/PV.5313

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5313th meeting

Wednesday, 30 November 2005, 1.20 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. Estreme
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Denmark	Mr. Pedersen
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mrs. Papadopoulou
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Philippines	Miss Aguinaldo
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Howe-Jones
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Manongi
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-62214 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 1.20 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now continue its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council.

"The Security Council welcomes the Agreement on Movement and Access and the Agreed Principles for the Rafah Crossing reached between the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority on 15 November 2005. The successful opening of the Rafah crossing on 25 November 2005 represents an important step forward.

"The Security Council commends the efforts of the Quartet, its Special Envoy and his team, as well as the positive contributions of the Government of Egypt, and expresses its strong appreciation to the European Union for assuming the role of third-party monitor.

"The Security Council calls on the parties to take immediate action to implement the terms of both agreements according to the time lines established therein.

"The Security Council calls for renewed action in parallel by the Government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority on their obligations in accordance with the Roadmap, to ensure continued progress towards the creation of a viable, democratic, sovereign and contiguous Palestine living side-by-side with Israel in peace and security. The Security Council stresses the importance of, and the need to achieve, a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East, based on all its relevant resolutions including its resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973), 1397 (2002) and 1515 (2003), the Madrid terms of reference and the principle of land for peace."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2005/57.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

United Nations S/PV.5314

Security Council

Sixtieth year

Provisional

5314th meeting

Wednesday, 30 November 2005, 1.25 p.m.
New York

President:	Mr. Denisov	(Russian Federation)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina	Mr. Barttfeld
	Benin	Mr. Zinsou
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Denmark	Mr. Pedersen
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece	Mrs. Papadopoulou
	Japan	Mr. Nakata
	Philippines	Miss Aguinaldo
	Romania	Mrs. Onisii
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Ms. Howe-Jones
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Manongi
	United States of America	Mr. Bolton

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

05-62220 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 1.25 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

The President (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Côte d'Ivoire in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Djangoné-Bi (Côte d'Ivoire) took a seat at the Council table.

The President (*spoke in Russian*): The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council affirms that the rapid appointment of a Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire is crucial to relaunch the peace process leading to the holding of free, fair, open and transparent elections no later than 31 October 2006, and to implement fully the road map established by the International Working Group (IWG) at its first meeting on 8 November 2005 in Abidjan.

"Therefore, the Security Council expresses its deep concern at the persistent disagreements among Ivorian parties on the appointment of the Prime Minister and considers that the Prime Minister must be designated without any further delay. The Council stresses once again that the Prime Minister must have all the necessary powers and resources described in paragraph 8 of resolution 1633 (2005).

"The Security Council commends the initiatives undertaken by the Chairperson of the African Union, the Chairperson of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union Mediator, and notes that their consultations with the parties signatories to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement have been held, as provided for by the decision of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union of 6 October 2005 and by resolution 1633 (2005). It reiterates its full support for them and urges them to expedite their efforts. The Security Council urges them to identify as soon as possible the candidate for the office of Prime Minister they deem acceptable to all parties signatories to the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement, given the consultations they have held.

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the IWG, endorses its final communiqué of 8 November 2005, welcomes its decision to hold its second meeting on 6 December 2005 in Abidjan, and urges the IWG to keep the Council informed of the conclusions of its work.

"The Security Council commends also the continuing efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the High Representative for the elections, and reiterates its support for them. In particular, it encourages the Ivorian parties to cooperate fully with the High Representative for the elections to resolve the current dispute concerning the Independent Electoral Commission and reaffirms that the High Representative, in accordance with paragraph 7 of resolution 1603 (2005), can make all the necessary determinations in order to help the electoral process move forward.

"The Security Council reaffirms its readiness, in close consultation with the African Union Mediation, to impose individual measures provided for in paragraphs 9 and 11 of resolution 1572 (2004) and in resolution 1633 (2005)."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2005/58.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.